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THE INTERNATIONAL FILM MAGAZINE



April 11

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Sight & Sound

April 2011

(incorporating Monthly Film Bulletin)
Published monthly by the BFI

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Volume 21 Issue 4 (NS)

ISSN 0037-4806 USPS 496-040

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COVER

Woody Allen

Photograph © Nicolas Guerin/

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Contents



FEATURES

WOODY ALLEN IN THE 21ST CENTURY COVER FEATURE

The received opinion may be that Woody Allen is past his best as a director, but **Brad Stevens** finds intriguing patterns in his European-set films of the last decade **16**
PLUS Woody Allen talks to **James Bell** about his latest London-set film *You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger* **18**

BERLIN REPORT HORSE LATITUDES

All the sound and fury of this year's Berlin festival – from Shakespeare to terrorism to 3D – was left in the shade by Béla Tarr's minimalist *The Turin Horse*, says **Nick James**
PLUS **Carmen Gray** scours the Forum for hidden gems **24**

OUT OF THE DARKNESS

Werner Herzog has turned to 3D to capture the wonder of 32,000-year-old palaeolithic cave paintings in his new film *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*. He talks to **Samuel Wigley** about primitive man and the ethics of 3D **28**

SENSUAL SENSIBILITY

Famously protective of his novels, Haruki Murakami has entrusted his 1987 bestseller *Norwegian Wood* to the Vietnamese-French director Tran Anh Hung, who tells **James Bell** about capturing the author's distinctive narrative voice **32**

UNDER THE SIGN OF SATURN

The new film *Patience (After Sebald)* and a recent symposium in Suffolk celebrate the cult of W.G. Sebald, inspiring **Mark Fisher** to revisit the German-born writer's East Anglian odyssey *The Rings of Saturn* **36**

THE FUGITIVE

After 30 years of making films in exile in the West, Jerzy Skolimowski is back working in his native Poland – appropriately enough, on the story of a man on the run in a foreign land. The director talks to **David Thompson** about his new film *Essential Killing* **38**

REGULARS



EDITORIAL

Bigger than life **5**

RUSHES

Nick Bradshaw talks to campaigning documentarist Alex Gibney about his new film *Client-9* **8**

Nick James encounters moments of bleakness in Rotterdam **9**

Charles Gant on an awards-season bonanza at the box office **9**

Daniel Trilling visits Agnès Varda's Paris home-cum-workshop **10**

Charles Burnett revisits 1946 Southern mystery *The Red House* **11**

Brian Robinson celebrates 25 years of the BFI London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival **12**

William Fowler on the uncertain future of 16mm prints **13**

Nick Roddick explores why film producers matter **15**

LETTERS

For and against *Black Swan*, library plans, a definition of auteurship **96**

READER OFFERS

22



16



Welcome. With spring in the air, what better time to stretch our legs. There's an emphasis on walking in the films in this month's issue, from a key scene in the new adaptation of Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (left and p.32), via a documentary evoking W.G. Sebald's famous East Anglian pilgrimage *The Rings of Saturn* (p.36), to *The Turin Horse*, the Steadicam sequence-shot *magnum opus* from Béla Tarr (far left) that swept all before it at this year's Berlin festival (p.24). The Polish director Jerzy Skolimowski returns with *Essential Killing* (p.38), which sends Vincent Gallo wandering through the snowy wastes, while Werner Herzog – no mean walker himself – explores the *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* (p.28). It's left to that most metropolitan of filmmakers, Woody Allen (p.16), to bring us back to the city as he talks exclusively to *S&S* about shooting his new film *You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger* here in London. ➡ **Nick James**

REVIEWS

50



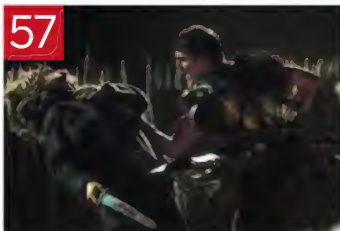
FILM OF THE MONTH

Submarine 44

FILMS

Age of the Dragons	46
All American Orgy	46
Anuvahood	47
Arthur and the Great Adventure	48
Ballast	48
Barney's Version	49
Benda Bilili!	50
Big Mommas	
Like Father like Son	51
Cave of Forgotten Dreams	52
Chalet Girl/Powder Girl	53
Client-9	
The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer	54
The Company Men	54
Country Strong	55
The Dilemma	56
Drive Angry	56
The Eagle	57

57



Eleanor's Secret/ Kérity La Maison des contes/ Nat e il segreto di Eleonora	58
Essential Killing	60
Faster	61
Gnomeo & Juliet	62
His & Hers	63
I Am Number Four	64
Ironclad	66
Just Go with It	66
Justin Bieber Never Say Never	67
Killing Bono	68
A Little Bit of Heaven	69
Norwegian Wood	70
No Strings Attached	71
Oranges and Sunshine	71
Patagonia	72
Paul	74
The Rite	75
Route Irish	76
Sanctum	77
Submarine	78

72



A Turtle's Tale Sammy's Adventures/Le Voyage extraordinaire de Samy	80
Unknown/Unknown Identity/ Sans identité	80
The Ward	81
You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger/Conocerás al hombre de tus sueños	82

DVDs

The Boy with Green Hair	84
Brighton Rock (1947)	84
Broadcast News	85
The Crowded Day/Song of Paris	85
Films by Peter Greenaway	85
Justified – Season 1	90
The Locket	86
The Magician	86
The Man Who Fell to Earth	86
One Continuous Take: The Kay Mander Film Book	86
Riot	87
Senso	88
The Social Network	89

74



Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em – The Complete Series	90
Szamanka	89
Trouble in Mind	89
The Valley (Obscured by Clouds)	90
The War You Don't See	90

DVD FEATURES

Geoffrey Macnab relishes the humour and humanity of Milos Forman's <i>A Blonde in Love</i>	84
William Ivory hails a quintet of BBC dramas by Jack Rosenthal	87
Tim Lucas gets Stuart Rosenberg's <i>WUSA</i> under his skin	88

BOOKS

David Jays finds Busby Berkeley's onscreen precision matched by offscreen personal turmoil	92
Nick Bradshaw enjoys a Chaplin quest by Kevin Brownlow	92
Brad Stevens wishes for more from a new biography of Arthur Penn	93
Kieron Corless is stimulated by a study of "post cinematic affect"	93

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NICK JAMES BIGGER THAN LIFE



Welcome to the world of 'post-cinema'. I'm using this term, which has been current in art-theory circles for some time, because it fits perfectly with two recent events: artist-filmmaker Tacita Dean's recent complaint in

The Guardian that 16mm celluloid prints can no longer be produced anywhere in the UK (see p.13), and the presentation of a day of non-Hollywood 3D films at the Berlinale. These both point towards a future in which the plenitude of moving-image resources we have enjoyed for some time – the simultaneous use of analogue celluloid, digital video and digital 3D – seems unlikely to persist.

In both cases the debate is between industry pragmatism and intellectual resistance. The artist-filmmakers' desire to retain the full armoury of hands-on celluloid filmmaking (Dean is one of many who use 16mm in this way) is not some remnant of a dying practice, but rather a burgeoning artistic response to the speed with which we discard practices and technologies that offer specific, quasi-magical access to memory and a sense of continuity with our predecessors.

That said, there is some misunderstanding as to why there is no longer an industrial need for 16mm prints. The issue is not about the use of 16mm film for shooting. How the cinematographer collects moving images is still, for the time being, a matter of choice: material shot on super 8, for instance, may continue to signify childhood in Hollywood features. But in most industrial cases, films shot on celluloid are then digitised for the intermediate editing stage and only finally printed – if at all – from the digital to 35mm. In this context making 16mm prints becomes a minority pursuit for those whose work involves the material pleasures of the celluloid medium – of feeling, smelling and projecting something that is substantial.

The 3D debate is more contentious. Critic Roger Ebert in his online journal is adamant that "3D... doesn't work with our brains and it never will." My own experiences have tended to bear him out. I have good vision in one eye and a lazy eye that in terms of focus can just about be bothered to turn up. Thus no one is more aware than I am that 3D makes your non-dominant eye do more work than it's designed to do. Ebert also has a letter from genius film editor Walter Murch

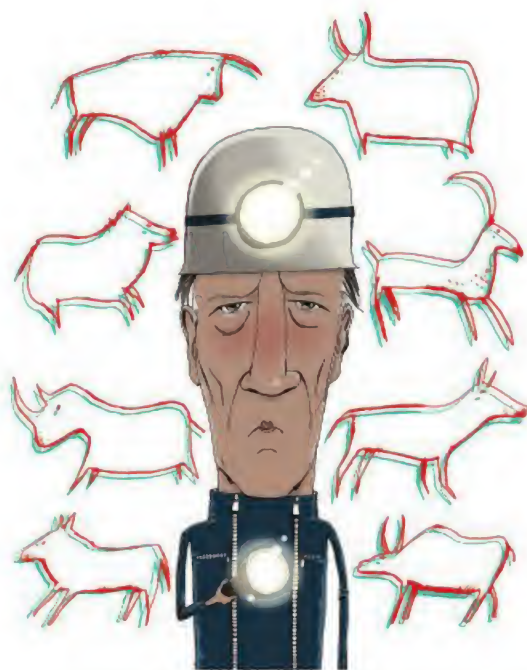
that lists more disadvantages: "The 3D image is dark... and small. Somehow the glasses 'gather in' the image... and make it seem half the scope... Horizontal movement will strobe much sooner in 3D than... 2D." And then comes the pay-off: 3D apparently makes your eyes converge towards one place but focus on another. As Murch puts it, "600 million years of evolution have never presented this problem before."

"The case is closed," claims Ebert. But my recent experience of watching Wim Wenders's *Pina* and Werner Herzog's *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* gives me pause. These films are documentaries to which a sense of three-dimensional space is crucial. But how solid is the experience? Three-dimensional, yes – but not, I would suggest, solid. Smaller and darker the image certainly is: if you're watching an ensemble dance like Pina Bausch's 'The Rite of Spring' from within its midst, you feel at times like you're thrashing in a soup of ghosts as figures fall away from the margins of the frame. There's no great sense of real depth, either: stage lighting

.....
Perhaps these works aren't films at all. Perhaps they are new experiences – the ultimate in 'post-cinema' – presenting us with the phantoms of real events
.....

tends to separate the foreground from the background into different planes, like classic Disney animation. Nonetheless, these works were a thrilling new experience that I would not have foregone. (Though I now know that my usual four films a day at festivals could not be maintained if they were all in 3D – it's too exhausting.)

But perhaps these works aren't films at all. Perhaps they are new audiovisual experiences – the ultimate in 'post-cinema' – presenting us with the phantoms of real events (and technological feats, rather than old-fashioned things like stories and characters and objects, are what draw many audiences nowadays). What links these 3D works from veteran New German Cinema auteurs with artist-filmmakers using old 16mm technology is that both sorts of practice have a built-in nostalgia for the real (I mean the subjective real experienced by individuals, not the Lacanian variety). No doubt in time there will be a 'black-and-white wind-up 16mm Bolex' setting on a future generation of digital 35mm cameras that will almost perfectly mimic the analogue. But the downside is, it won't 'feel' real.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIAN ANDERSON/ILLUSTRATION BY SIMON COOPER AT WWW.COOPERILLU.COM

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Sight & Sound is published monthly.
In the USA: Periodicals Postage
Paid at Rahway, NJ.
US Agent: Mercury International,
365 Blair Road, Avenel, NJ 07001.
Postmaster: send address
corrections to Sight & Sound,
c/o Mercury International at the
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Subscription office:
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Annual subscription rates:
UK £47, Euro and ROW £61
£16 discount for BFI members



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THE BIGGER PICTURE



Devil women

To call Henri Georges-Clouzot (right) the French Hitchcock is in one sense unfair, for Clouzot was very much his own man, and in his chillingly atmospheric 1954 thriller 'Les Diaboliques' he crafted a gripping classic of murderous tension that Hitchcock would have been proud to call his own. (Indeed Hitch was even rumoured to have been attached to it at an early stage.) Adapted from a

novel by Boileau and Narcejac, who also wrote the source novel for 'Vertigo', this too tells a story of intrigue, as it follows the wife and mistress (Véra Clouzot and Simone Signoret, above) of a tyrannical headmaster (Paul Meurisse) as they plot to end his hold over them. The restored film plays from 18 March at BFI Southbank and venues across the country. Bathtime will never seem the same again.



LEFT: STILLAS; POSTERS AND DESIGNS: ©RONALD GRANT; ARCHIVE (C)

America's conscience

Alex Gibney, chief exposé of the corruption of America's elite, talks to Nick Bradshaw

Alex Gibney (right) has become the movies' go-to chronicler of the crimes and follies of America's ruling class. His films make a handy compendium of the scandals of the Bush II years, opening with 2005's *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room*, a dissection of the financial chicanery and hubris that blew up the deregulators' favourite energy firm, it now plays as a portent of later global economic collapse. *Taxi to the Dark Side* (2007) followed the command responsibility for US military war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan right to the White House. And while 2008's *Gonzo: The Life and Work of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson* was by one token a detour into pop culture, it also offered Thompson's views on four decades of US politics, including his prescient, despairing reaction to 9/11.

Last year Gibney finished two new films, both portraits of poster boys for late-Bush-era political corruption scandals, or those he calls "flawed individuals... with certain hubris problems". *Casino Jack and the United States of Money* examines the myriad intrigues of Republican lobbyist Jack Abramoff, who like many free marketers saw the naive, gullible and powerless (from Native American casino tribes to exploited workers on the Marianas Islands) as fair game. The exposure of his outré influence-peddling brought down a small phalanx of politicians, including the Republican Senate leader.

Conversely, *Client-9 The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer* concerns the prostitution scandal that ensnared New York's crusading attorney general-turned-governor, who made his name – and powerful enemies – excoriating Wall Street greed and corruption. "A one-man wrecking



'Wall Street did an effective job of using its lobbyists to muscle laws that directly benefited it and marginalised us'

crew," Gibney calls him. "Few people have both the ability to understand those kinds of financial crimes and the *cojones* to go after them."

The Department of Justice wouldn't let Gibney record his prison chats with Abramoff for *Casino Jack*, "but there's always a way to skin a cat," he says. Abramoff apparently warned to Gibney, at least before seeing the film. "I told him I thought he was not a bad apple but evidence of a rotten barrel – a narrative he was very interested in because he'd been portrayed even by his close political associates as a rotten apple." (*Enron* also makes hay with the apple analogy.)

Client-9 is the richer movie, not only because Spitzer agreed to an unrestricted interview (and, as Gibney says, "it's about the way the world works, stuff we all go through – sex, love, marriage") but because Spitzer's bodily awkwardness speaks almost as volubly as his words. "He's comfortable talking about the political economy," Gibney qualifies, "but when he's asked, for example, 'Why hookers? Why not have an affair?' he gets very uncomfortable. He's not a terribly introspective individual. You can see the problems that causes, because when you don't know your own mind, or emotional state, you make rather bad mistakes."

The film also boasts a rogue's gallery of Spitzer's enemies – Home Depot founder Ken Langone, sexually colourful Republican muckraker Roger Stone and insurance giant AIG's fallen head Hank Greenberg – all of whom are less than poker-faced as they deny responsibility for leading

federal investigators (and thence the press) to Spitzer's indiscretions.

"They had a blast," says Gibney. "Honestly, they loved every moment. They were dancing on their enemy's grave. That's the other interesting thing about this story: it's about political blood sport, and the utility to which sexual scandals are put by political operatives... to embarrass and discredit their enemies."

Both films also hint at bigger, more insidious forces in the shadows, be it within the Department of Justice in Spitzer's case or the entire political lobbying system in Abramoff's.

"You get a peek into the kitchen of the Chinese restaurant to see how the political food is really made," agrees Gibney, "and it's not a pretty picture. What Abramoff did was outrageous, but he was a piker when it came to political corruption. Wall Street did a much more effective job of using its lobbyists to muscle laws that directly benefited it and marginalised the rest of us: a New York hedge fund manager pays a tax rate half that of his or her secretary, purely due to the legalised bribery we have in the US."

"The interesting thing about Spitzer is he smacked a lot of very powerful people right in the nose. And that was a little bit like shaking the beehive: you see the swarm come out and you realise how big its sting is. So in both cases you start to see just how big a problem political and economic corruption is."

■ *'Client-9' is released on 4 March. Alex Gibney's next two projects will be about Lance Armstrong and WikiLeaks*

● Oliver Stone is set to direct 'Savages', a thriller about drug cartels based on the book by Don Winslow. The story follows two friends who have a thriving homegrown dope business but fall prey to a Mexican drug cartel, which holds their mutual girlfriend hostage. 'Winter's Bone' star Jennifer Lawrence is set to lead, with the two main male roles yet to be cast.

● Michael Winterbottom is developing 'Trishna', a modern retelling of Thomas Hardy's 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles' that relocates the action from 19th-century Wessex to today's India. Winterbottom has reportedly cast Riz Ahmed (who starred in 'The Road to Guantánamo') and Freida Pinto.

● Abbas Kiarostami is to follow his Tuscany-shot 'Certified Copy' with 'The End', which the Iranian director will shoot in Japan. The film is a co-production between Japan's Eurospace and France's MK2, and is described by MK2's president Nathanael Karmitz as "something of a continuation of 'Certified Copy', featuring a "contemporary relationship in today's Japan". The film, which starts shooting in April, will star Japanese actress Miyazaki Aoi.

● Olivier Assayas (pictured below) follows 'Carlos' with 'Après mai' ('Something in the Air'), a coming-of-age story set in the 1970s. Written by Assayas and produced by MK2, it follows an 18-year-old Frenchman as he – as MK2's Nathanael Karmitz puts it – "reacts to the rapid social change and political activism that began in the late 60s".

Filming begins at the end of May.



● Paul Thomas Anderson is said to be developing an adaptation of Thomas Pynchon's 2009 novel 'Inherent Vice'. Robert Downey Jr is reportedly discussing the lead role – a stoner private detective in 1969 LA who's hired by a former girlfriend to investigate the disappearance of her wealthy lover. Anderson had been set to direct 'The Master', a drama about Scientology, but Universal Pictures apparently balked at its \$35 million budget. It's now reported that billionaire Megan Ellison may rescue both projects.



The road less travelled

Nick James encounters moments of bleakness – and warmth – in Rotterdam

I've critiqued the Rotterdam International Film Festival's overall take on current world cinema elsewhere (see web link at the end of this piece), so what follows here are the films that lightened an overload.

I was happy to see two films by Spanish actor-director Agustí Villaronga, including his 1986 debut *In a Glass Cage* (*Tras el cristal*), a crazily warped post-Nazi melodrama that mixes ideas from Losey's *The Servant* and Cavani's *The Night Porter*. Günter Meisner plays an ex-Nazi doctor and torturer who ends up in an iron lung after a failed suicide bid. A young nurse (David Sust) knows all about his past and makes the paralytic relive it as a helpless voyeur. Much less outlandish but more palatable is his latest, *Pa negre* (*Black Bread*), a vivid, labyrinthine drama about a post-Civil War schoolboy who finds two corpses in the woods and then sees his 'red' father arrested. Sent to live with his grandmother, the boy sees hard truths disentangle.

Probably the most emotionally complex film on show was Korean Yoon Sung-hyun's feature debut *Bleak Night*, an ambitious ensemble saga that reveals the anguish behind the bravado of school gang members



Boys will be boys: 'Bleak Night' reveals the turmoil of youthful male power play

wrestling for ascendancy over each other as adulthood looms. Mathieu Amalric follows *On Tour* with an energetic modern-dress version of *L'illusion comique*, a play by 17th-century dramatist Corneille, performed by the Comédie-Française in Alexandrine couplets. In it, a noble father seeks his long-missing son through the auspices of a magician (in the film a concierge) and watches his son's life unfold on a hotel's CCTV cameras.

Outbound, by Romanian director Bogdan George Apetri, follows a woman on a 24-hour pass from prison as she tries to put everything right before absconding; it's well

made and authentic in feel, if a little predictable. You couldn't say the latter about Sinisa Dragin's *If the Seed Doesn't Die*, a bizarre twin story about a Romanian father seeking his daughter, sold into prostitution in Kosovo, and a Serbian father seeking the corpse of his son, who died in an accident. A solid entry in the school of absurd Balkan black comedy, it's less original than the director's 2002 breakthrough *Every Day God Kisses Us on the Mouth*. I was also touched by the bleakly poignant moments in Russian director Vladimir Kott's *Gromozeka*, a perspicacious mid-life-crisis movie about three men who were once in band together: a

philandering surgeon, a useless cop and a taxi driver who's discovered his daughter is in the porn trade. That one is aching for a US remake.

I saw only part of Peter von Bagh's 270-minute *Sodankylä Forever*, a documentary compilation of interviews conducted at the legendary Festival of the Midnight Sun. This warm bath of nostalgia for better cinephile times contains many indelible moments: Michael Powell sitting by a log fire with Jim Jarmusch at his feet made me wistful; hearing Chabrol talk about how he became a filmmaker had me giggling. A similar reverence for the likes of Tom Mix and Eisenstein – plus a self-deprecating humour – can be found in Federico Veiroj's *La vida útil* (*A Useful Life*), about a veteran Uruguayan projectionist who finds that his job is coming to an end.

Another well-matched pairing were two films about old houses and the men who've spent their lives looking after them: José María de Orbe's *Father* (*Aita*), already seen at the London Film Festival, and Théo Court's *Ocaso* (*Decline*), about the major-domo of an abandoned Chilean mansion that languishes in mist. It is in such obscurity that Rotterdam needs to find its future path.

■ For more of Nick James on Rotterdam, see www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/newsandviews/festivals/rotterdam-2011

THE NUMBERS

Playing sardines

An influx of awards-bait big fish has put the squeeze on smaller fry, says Charles Gant

The annual awards season has always been a marketing jamboree for the film industry, as yards of free publicity help convert nominations into ticket sales. Yet the rich opportunities for prestige pictures attract so many competitors into the market at this time that casualties are inevitable. As the distributors of *Milk* and *Frost/Nixon* learned in 2009 when they battled *Slumdog Millionaire* for audiences, Best Picture nominations at both the Baftas and Oscars are no guarantee of box-office success.

What makes the 2011 awards season unusual is the degree to which the awards-giving academies have proved in step with public taste.

All five Bafta nominees for Best Film – *The King's Speech*, *The Social Network*, *Black Swan*, *True Grit* and *Inception* – have been hits, as have Best Picture Oscar nominees such as *127 Hours*, *The Fighter* and *Toy Story 3*. While *127 Hours* did better in the UK than the US, and the reverse is proving true for *True Grit* (see chart), the only awards-bait movies that have struggled commercially are those with zero or negligible nominations.

Clare Binns, chief booker at the Picturehouse arthouse chain, is buoyant. "An exceptional year for us," she says, "unlike any I have known. Records smashed week in and week out, and with some brilliant films." With such a rich mix of prestige offerings, her only regret is having to pull titles from venues before their full value has been extracted: "Some films like *Blue Valentine*, *Butiful* and

Brighton Rock came off screen or on to split show times when really they should have, in another time, been allowed to breathe. *Rabbit Hole*, a very good film, just did not stand a chance in the awards season, which is a shame. Same for the entertaining *Barney's Version*."

Jason Wood, booker for the Curzon cinemas, faced similar challenges. "You have to be selective to ensure profitability and exploit the marquee value of the awards-nominated titles," he says. "*Black Swan* and *The King's Speech* were certainly the winners this year, though *True Grit* also did well. For us, *The Fighter* was a regrettable casualty. Despite its numerous acting accolades and pedigree, we simply weren't able to give it any screens – though this is a title that has just as natural a home in the multiplexes." For Clare Binns, everyone's interests

Best Picture Oscar nominees

Film	US Gross	UK Gross
<i>Toy Story 3</i>	\$415.0m	£73.83m
<i>Inception*</i>	\$292.6m	£35.81m
<i>True Grit*</i>	\$164.1m	£4.55m
<i>The King's Speech*</i>	\$103.3m	£37.12m
<i>Black Swan*</i>	\$101.5m	£14.28m
<i>The Social Network*</i>	\$96.7m	£10.57m
<i>The Fighter</i>	\$87.9m	£5.16m
<i>The Kids Are All Right</i>	\$20.8m	£1.64m
<i>127 Hours</i>	\$17.4m	£7.11m
<i>Winter's Bone</i>	\$6.4m	£746,000

* Also Bafta Best Film nominee. All grosses to 20 February

might be better served if the January and February embarrassment of riches were more spread out across the year: "If only producers could be persuaded to hang back with good films that everyone but them knows won't make the cut." Once producers get a whiff of awards glory, however, delusional intoxication always prevails over common sense.

Living memory

Daniel Trilling visits the Paris home of filmmaker Agnès Varda and finds it an ever-changing testament to her life and art

Sitting in the living-room of Agnès Varda's house in the Rue Daguerre, Paris, where she has lived and worked for 60 years, I'm finding it hard to concentrate on the task in hand. Partly because her cat, Nini, has climbed on to my lap and is now curling herself contentedly into a little ball, but also because the place itself is so distracting.

On the window-sill sits the clock without hands that Varda retrieves from a rubbish dump in *The Gleaners and I* (2000), her documentary about the tramps, travellers and outcasts who roam France living off other people's waste. In one corner sits the giant orange cartoon cat behind which Chris Marker hides when he appears (or rather doesn't appear) in Varda's film memoir *The Beaches of Agnès* (2008). The rest of the room is cluttered with art books, magazines and mementos of her career – I think I even spot a postcard from Jean-Luc Godard on her writing desk.

As my eyes flit around, Varda is telling me how pleased she is to meet a journalist from *Sight & Sound*. "They do a good job," she says. "We always need people going too far in the understanding of film. *Qu'est-ce que c'est le cinéma?* What it is in our society? How come it is meaningful, or not meaningful?" Such a preoccupation runs through Varda's unique and varied output, not only as a director, but as an accomplished photographer and, latterly, an installation artist. (Her first gallery exhibition was in 2003 at the Venice Biennale, when Varda was already well into her seventies.)

Visiting the Rue Daguerre brings this into sharp focus. For Varda, her art is absolutely indivisible from the life around it. Her house, an old picture frame workshop, is where she raised her children, and where

in 1990 she brought her husband Jacques Demy back from hospital to die when he was in the final stages of Aids. Now Varda is excitedly describing how the house has been adapted over the years to her shifting personal and professional routines: "A house is something alive, that's what I'm saying – moved all the time, changed all the time. I hope that when I die – I hope not violently – I die peacefully here. Because it's like a relation to where you are, your work. I have all my negatives here, all my things. The editing room is there."

With that last comment, Varda gestures to a doorway that opens from the living-room into an adjoining office. Across the street, in an old shop unit, is her production company Ciné Tamaris, which also doubles as a shop where visitors can buy DVDs of films by her and Demy. Two or three times a day, says Varda, visitors will call at the shop, and they're welcome to browse the collection or even watch her at work editing. "I love being able to have the direct contact with consumers. It's like a peasant who grows tomatoes and you can come and buy them at the farm. [Visitors] say, 'Ah, it's so wonderful to buy a DVD where it was made!' There are not these walls of trade and intermediaries."

When we meet, Varda has been up since the early hours, frantically trying to finish the edit of a five-part documentary series for the French

Her room is cluttered with mementos of her career – I think I spot a postcard from Jean-Luc Godard



PHOTOGRAPH BY FASCALUNGHERI

Colourful figure: Varda likes to meet her "consumers", who can even watch her editing

television channel Arte. For this she has travelled around the world to visit artists and directors, ranging from Carlos Reygadas and Manoel de Oliveira to the painters Pierre Soulages and Miquel Barceló. "All these guys, they have a world, a universe," Varda says by way of explaining her motivation for the film. "I took two years. I love the idea that I could go and have these people express themselves, not just have fast, fast news: 'He is opening an exhibition...' Blah blah, gone."

And as with so many of her films, Varda was unable to stop her attention wandering to the surrounding life of the communities she visited. "I found a woman in Mexico in a little market," she says, of her trip to visit Reygadas. "A woman not young, 60, 65, with a pink evening dress to go to the ball. Satin pink. A lot of jewellery. And she had kept one roller in. She was sweeping the entrance of the market. She was so chic at 7.30 in the morning, I filmed her and took photos."

It's this interest in people that keeps her working, even at the age of 82. "I love what life brings you – the surprises of people. People who are original or independent, or they care about others. This is what I think

is so exciting that I don't stop. I'm alive because I travel. I'm alive because I speak with people."

Reflecting on her career, Varda says she made "one mistake", which was having a hit film – *Vagabond* (1985) – because it gave people unrealistic expectations of what would follow. "I will show you the closet of awards," she says. "A full closet of awards. But if I want to make a film, I don't find the money. It's incredible, they don't trust me." Not that this has ever dimmed her enthusiasm. "I'm proud of it, in a way. Godard said to me one day, '*Que la marge c'est ça qui tient le livre.*' [It's the margin that holds the book together.] I love that. Sometimes it gives me the feeling that justifies my unsuccessful. *Je tiens le livre!*"

"I think the world of cinema needs people like me. We are millions – I am not the only one. They work whether they have success or not, they work on the matter of cinema, trying to understand."

■ A retrospective of Agnès Varda's films, plus a selection of her photography and art, is showing at the Cork French Film Festival, Ireland, until 13 March. See www.corkfrenchfilmfestival.com. For more by Daniel Trilling on Agnès Varda see www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound



Fragments of a life: Varda's films and personal life meet in the objects filling her home

Anger management

Filmmaker **Charles Burnett** remembers the thrills, disturbances and subdued rage of *'The Red House'*

I must have seen *The Red House* (1946) first on television, some time in the 1950s. I was a young boy at the time and it left a lasting impression on me. I'd not seen a film before that was so disturbing – I'd seen horror films, but nothing that was so psychologically effective. I can't understand why it's not shown more in film classes, why it's not better appreciated. Delmer Daves was a very good director.

The film is set up at the beginning almost like a Grimm fairytale – 'Little Red Riding Hood' or 'Hansel and Gretel'. It opens in beautiful countryside, a small-town American idyll. It's a sunny day. The kids are on the school bus. A voiceover tells us that it was once a place covered by dense forest, but no longer – the land has been tamed by civilisation, light has entered and penetrated the darkness. Everywhere, that is, except for the Oxhead woods, which are criss-crossed with dead-end trails and an abandoned road that leads only to the Morgan farm, a place like a walled castle that everybody knows about but few have entered. It reminds me of a book that I like very much by Stanton Forbes called *Grieve for the Past*, which is also about a house that holds dark secrets, and which starts with a lovely poem. It's as though just behind the small-town idyll, hidden in the woods, down these paths that lead nobody knows where, is the big bad secret everybody carries.

It's one of the best-written mystery movies I can think of, because it all seems so real and natural. It has more than just one-dimensional characters, and reminds me of Jean Renoir's *The Southerner* in that respect. Edward G. Robinson plays one-legged farmer Pete Morgan, who lives with his sister Ellen (Judith Anderson) and a girl named Meg (Allene Roberts), who they have raised as their own, telling Meg that her own parents died down south looking for work during the Depression. Meg's now a teenager and interested in boys – in particular Nath Storm (Lon McCallister), who she's after despite his going out with the school sexpot Tibby (Julie London). Meg persuades Pete to employ Nath as a farmhand over the summer, and it leads to a web of long-buried secrets being forced out. At dinner at the end of his first day on the farm, Nath tells them that people in town whisper gossip about what really happened to Meg's parents. When Nath tells Pete



Sins of the father: Edward G. Robinson's role elicits a complicated mix of pity and fear

he plans to take a shortcut home through the Oxhead woods, Pete warns him not to, because of "the screams from the Red House that will lodge in your bones all your life". The Red House is an abandoned building even deeper in the woods, and Nath and Meg decide to find it and uncover what happened there years ago.

If you grew up in a small town like that, you know there's a lot going on under the surface. They seem idyllic, but in reality they're some of the most disturbing places of all. David Lynch brought that contradiction out brilliantly in *Blue Velvet*, but in the mid-1940s how much was that shown on screens? *Film noirs* of the time have perversities running through them, but here it's so close to the surface.

It's also very frank about sex for its time. In one scene Teller (Rory Calhoun), who Pete employs to watch over the woods and keep people away from the Red House, tells Tibby: "I'm good at things they don't teach at school." This non-prudish attitude is healthy – it's suppressing things, like Pete, that leads to sickness.

.....
These small towns seem idyllic, but in reality they're some of the most disturbing places
.....

Edward G. Robinson does such a good job of conveying his character's twisted inside. I've seen him in gangster films, but here he is more than just an actor – it is like he is a person in the room with you, which is very scary. He has a protective shell about him, but deep down he has this secret, that thing that makes you feel ambivalent towards him. Is he good or bad... or what? Towards the end, Ellen tells Meg, "You must pity Pete." Ellen and Pete's relationship is disturbing because it's so suggestive of incest, but her comment is sympathetic, as it suggests Pete is as much a victim as he is a monster, because he's carried these haunting memories all his life.

I was also very impressed by Rory Calhoun. He plays this hired hand, but not as the typical backward hillbilly who you might find in, say, *Deliverance*. People in the film have these grey areas. When Tibby, this very sexy girl, falls for him – which doesn't seem like it should happen because Nath is the hero – you can understand it because he's this strong, attractive guy. Your sympathies are pulled between the characters in ways you wouldn't expect.

Miklós Rózsa's score really adds to the sense of anxiety. He was a great composer who did *Spellbound* with Hitchcock. In the scene when Nath first goes into the woods, the wind becomes a gale and the music suddenly swells and turns deafening and dramatic, and in amongst the strings Rózsa uses a theremin. It's this sound that you associate with sci-fi, and yet here it is in this rural thriller.

There are several scenes that have stayed in my memory. One of the most haunting is when Pete stands on a wooden jetty, Meg swims towards him and he calls her "Jeanie", which is the name of the woman he loved – Meg's mother. It's horrifying and at the same time tragic.

Someone really needs to do a restoration of the film. It's on DVD, but the picture and the sound are so bad that they don't do justice to the Rózsa score, or to Bert Glennon's black-and-white cinematography. I wish I could see it on the big screen.

There are different interpretations of the film: you could see the Red House as being like the Overlook Hotel in *The Shining*, making Pete do what he did. It's almost supernatural. At one point Pete turns and says, "There's a curse in these woods." But I see it as though he's tormented by the crime he committed and he's in denial, trying to project it on to something else. He'll blame anything but himself, his jealousies, his rage.

It's a strange film to have seen as a boy, because it's about a man who has carried dark secrets with him all his life, and seeing it again today I might take different things from it. It's like when you're a kid listening to the blues and you haven't had the experiences those guys are singing about yet; you might like it for other reasons – the sound, the rhythm of the song – but not the lyrics, because you've not got there yet. Later, when you've experienced life a bit, you can appreciate it more. You can say: "Now I understand what he's singing about. What anger is when it's unresolved." Charles Burnett was speaking to James Bell. His films include *'Killer of Sheep'*, *'The Glass Shield'* and *'Nightjohn'*

What the papers said



"An interesting psychological thriller, with its mood sustained throughout... however, [it] has too slow a pace, so that the paucity of incident and action stands out..., despite good performances"

'Variety', December 1946

"Warped relationships are the norm in this weird but hardly wonderful world... It's a pastoral, noir-inflected psychodrama with supernatural overtones, dealing chiefly with the thin line between healthy and sick sexuality. All very Freudian, in fact, and often very frightening, with Edward G. Robinson in superb form as the patriarch tormented by his past"

Geoff Andrew, 'Time Out'

The pride and the passion

Now 25 years old, the London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival is still relevant, says programmer **Brian Robinson**

Going back to the start of the BFI London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival (LLGFF), which celebrates its 25th edition this year, takes us to 1986 – a world where paranoia about Aids and the government's attempt to ban the promotion of homosexuality made the festival's very existence a provocation to the prevailing zeitgeist. The idea itself goes back even further, however, to the founding of the Gay Liberation Front in Britain on 11 October 1970.

It was a gay-liberationist perspective that led Professor Richard Dyer of the University of Warwick to suggest a programme of gay films to parallel the work that had been done on women's and black cinema at the BFI. More than 35 films, both contemporary and older, were shown at the National Film Theatre in the summer of 1977. Even questions by MPs over the validity of spending taxpayers' money on 'pornography' failed to dent the event's popularity.

Lesbians and gays had long found a fulfilling niche in film appreciation. Generations brought up on Cocteau, Visconti, Anger and Warhol knew that the cinema could bring pleasures and identifications outside the Hollywood mainstream. In film criticism, Parker Tyler's writing had a resolutely queer inflection, while Robin Wood's coming-out influenced his practice as a film critic so much that he changed his opinions and inscribed his sexuality on to his critical identity. In his essay 'Responsibilities of a Gay Film Critic' (originally delivered as a lecture at

the NFT in 1976) Wood articulated his aim: "To contribute, in however modest a way, to the possibility of social revolution, along lines suggested by radical feminism, Marxism and gay liberation."

The 1970s saw the growth of an appetite and audience for films with gay subjects, as the post-Stonewall generation created its own culture. Then in 1986 Mark Finch, a former student of Richard Dyer, convinced the NFT programmers to show a selection of nine films entitled 'Gays' Own Pictures', based on an event at the Tyneside Film Festival.

The selection included Steve Buscemi's acting debut *Parting Glances*, directed by Bill Sherwood, Donna Deitch's *Desert Hearts* and Arthur Bressan's *Buddies*, all of which remain classics of their genre. *Dancing in Dulais*, meanwhile, was a made-for-television account of an unlikely project in which a Welsh community in the grip of the Miners' Strike was adopted by a group of left-wing activist lesbians and gay men.

This eclectic mixture of narrative, experiment and documentary remains the festival's hallmark to this day. Looking back across its various editions, one is struck by the varied range of creativity on show, the gradual waning of the trope of the suicidal lonely queen, the increasing confidence of the communities reflected on screen and the increase in that once rarest of films, the lesbian narrative feature.

Inevitably, the impact of Aids is writ large across the programmes as filmmakers grappled to make sense of a devastating medical emergency. Rob Epstein and Peter Adair's *The Aids Show* (1986), a vibrant agitprop video of an activist theatre project, was typical, as was Barbara Hammer's *Snow Job: The Media Hysteria of Aids*

(1986). Many filmmakers were themselves lost to Aids – to this day the great unspoken impact on queer cultural production. For a filmic take on this issue, watch David Weissman's *We Were Here*, a brilliant and moving account of the Aids crisis in San Francisco that played at the Sundance and Berlin festivals and will feature in this year's LLGFF.

In the 1980s there was a mere handful of gay film festivals; now there are over 180 worldwide. Notable pioneers were San Francisco's Frameline, LA's Outfest and Turin's Da Sodoma a Hollywood. In 1992 Sundance elevated a generation of leading lesbian and gay filmmakers to public attention via its Barbed Wire Kisses panel, hosted by B. Ruby Rich. Its members – among them Isaac Julien, Todd Haynes, Gregg Araki, Gus Van Sant and Derek Jarman – are among the names who went on to define queer filmmaking. A seminal article by Rich, originally published in *Village Voice*, christened the movement when it was republished in *Sight & Sound* under the heading 'New Queer Cinema'.

The Berlin Film Festival's gay Teddy Award, also celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, has latterly been joined by initiatives at Venice (Queer Lion) and Cannes (Queer Palm). Previously, Europe's A-list festivals (with the notable exception of Berlin) didn't demonstrate much of an interest in gay films. But in recent years – with João Pedro Rodrigues's *O fantasma* (*Phantom*, 2000) and John Cameron Mitchell's *Shortbus* (2006) appearing at Venice, and Araki's *Kaboom* (2010) at Cannes – there seems to be a new appetite for queer cinema. Anyone watching Gus Van Sant's early diary films in 1986 would surely have been surprised to know that he would go on to win the Palme d'Or at Cannes for *Elephant* in 2003.

Out of the margins

So what does this mean for the future? Queer filmmakers may no longer be as marginalised as they once were, but audiences still need the chance to explore the coming generation of new voices, whose films reflect a diversity of interests and experiences that are still not part of the general vocabulary of cinema. True, one can follow the trajectory of a career like that of John Greyson – who was present at the festival with early shorts in 1987, and whose promise was more than fulfilled with the features *Lilies* (1996), *Proteus* (2003) and *Fig Trees* (2009). But for every Greyson or Araki, there are dozens of filmmakers who struggle.



Lesbian directors remain marginalised. There are exceptions: when Lisa Cholodenko's *High Art* opened the LLGFF in 1999, few could have foreseen her receiving Oscar nominations for *The Kids Are All Right*. But how many other lesbians can you name who have made more than three narrative features?

Some distributors or directors resist having their films shown in a gay festival, worried that they will be labelled 'gay films'. The marketing campaigns for *A Single Man* and *Brokeback Mountain* were object lessons in how to sell a gay film in a manner that would lure in the non-gay audience. However, the good news is that distributors increasingly enjoy the additional exposure and PR buzz that a gay festival can offer. Television and mainstream film distributors are generally not interested in a large part of the more provocative or challenging output of contemporary filmmakers, but there is a ready market for titles suitable for theatrical release or DVD.

The shocking fact remains, however, that a film as popular and widely seen as *Parting Glances*, released as recently as 1986, was in urgent need of restoration due to the lack of any surviving prints in distribution by the beginning of the 21st century – which gives an indication of the issue of access to



A bevy of beauties: posters for past editions of the LLGFF, in 1992 and 2005

Format war

Artists like Tacita Dean depend on 16mm prints. But are they now an endangered species, asks William Fowler

In the same week that Goldsmiths lecturer Richard MacDonald stressed (in a talk in the BFI National Library) how important the use of 16mm film was in building and supporting the post-war film-society movement, a potential crisis emerged regarding the future of the very same format. On 22 February, Turner Prize-winning artist Tacita Dean reported in 'The Guardian' that Soho Film Lab has stopped producing 16mm prints – and called passionately for a reversal of this decision.

Deluxe, the new owners of Soho Film Lab, feel that 16mm printing is no longer commercially viable, and that use of the gauge is in decline (most arthouse cinemas, for instance, have replaced their 16mm projectors with a digital server). But the fact remains that a great many artists still use 16mm, and galleries around the world exhibit it. So there is a parallel culture where, if anything, 16mm is on the rise.

And it's hardly a marginal practice. Turner Prize-winners including Mark Leckey and Dean herself use or have used 16mm, as do Jarman Award-winners Luke Fowler and Emily Wardill. The interests of these artists lie less in nostalgia than in a concern for the unique properties of the medium: its indexical relationship with light, its potential as a hands-on craft, the mechanics of its presentation and the possibilities for play with its surface.

The issue here is not just with future production, however. It's also about exhibiting films made during the last century. The integrity of artists' films that explore the formal elements of 16mm is at risk when they're seen in another format. The preservation of the countless 16mm documentaries and independent films in the BFI National Archive could also be potentially complicated by this reduction in lab service.

While Deluxe's decision appears to have been made quickly and simply (it's an international company whose decisions are made in the USA), the ensuing debates are less cut and dried. Dean's assertion in 'The Guardian' that Soho Film Lab was the only company still producing 16mm prints in the UK is not entirely correct; Prestech and Film & Photo also offer the service, though typically to large or specialist clients. There are also other layers to Deluxe's decisions about the lab: 16mm negative stock will continue to be processed (most demand is for 16mm negative, which is then telecined to video), but this activity will be moved to another site. This refinement in procedure could have consequences for archival work.

Dean suggests that the BFI could facilitate a specialist 16mm lab – and this could be a very rich and interesting development. In the meantime, the debate here seems to be in part about what constitutes a 'marginal' artistic activity – 16mm artist filmmaking is a critically supported practice subject to increasing interest from collectors. Let's hope some accommodation can be reached with the more economic imperatives of the film industry.



Many filmmakers were themselves lost to Aids. For a filmic take on this issue, watch David Weissman's 'We Were Here'

queer cinema's archives. The Outfest Legacy Project is an ongoing collaboration with the UCLA Film and Television Archives to rescue internationally important films of the queer canon, but it can only scrape the surface of what's needed. Where are the DVD box-sets of John Greyson's early work? And though Barbara Hammer will have a major retrospective at Tate Modern in 2012, there are dozens of her celluloid sisters who deserve another look.

The glory of the LLGFF, and one of the most important reasons for its existence, is discovery: exposing unknown independent filmmakers who have the cinematic intelligence to tell new stories in fresh ways – and celebrate sexual diversity. The existence of YouTube, Graham Norton and gay storylines in soap opera doesn't remove the need for a festival like the LLGFF; if anything, with the technological and cultural explosion of image-making, we're now in even greater need of a filter for big-screen work.

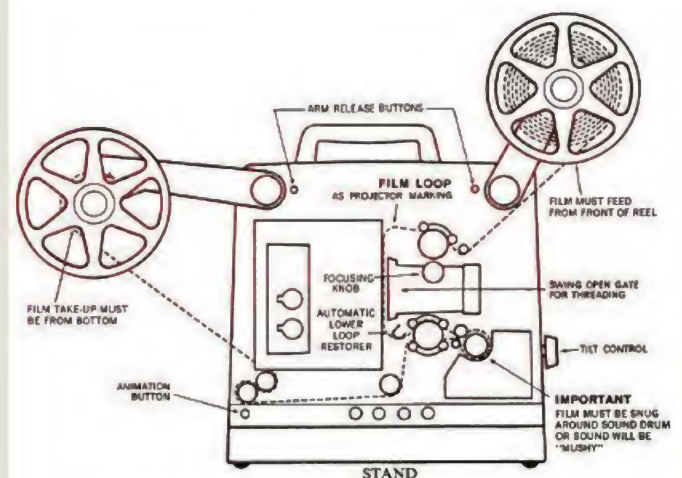
Xavier Dolan's *I Killed My Mother* (*J'ai tué ma mère*, 2009) is an interesting example of a film that

might previously only have been seen at a gay film festival, but played at Cannes and Toronto, as well as at last year's LLGFF. His follow-up *Heartbeats* (*Les Amours imaginaires*) was also selected for Cannes in 2010 – a remarkable achievement for a 21-year-old filmmaker.

Although this year's LLGFF has been constrained by budget cuts, and has consequently been shortened to a week, it still boasts more than 35 features, including a strong showing for UK films and world premieres from rising stars, such as Kanchi Wichman's *Break My Fall* and Mark Harriott and Mike Matthews's *Unhappy Birthday*.

Born out of radical activism, now courted by corporate sponsors, the LLGFF can, I hope, continue to adapt – while also continuing to showcase contemporary and earlier queer cinema to a new generation, engage with new debates and enhance the lives of viewers, regardless of sexual preference.

■ The London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival runs from 31 March to 6 April. See www.bfi.org.uk/llgff



Sweet 16: working with celluloid retains a hands-on, artisanal appeal for artists

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In praise of producers

The death of German producer Bernd Eichinger from a heart attack in January appeared on film-industry websites within hours and made the front page in Germany, yet barely caused a ripple in the UK press. This is not surprising: behind-the-camera talent scores low on the celebrity swingometer, unless it makes a lot of noise (like Harvey Weinstein) or marries Madonna (like Guy Ritchie). Producers are the moneymen, the suits, and therefore not sexy. And that's without being German.

But Eichinger deserves to be remembered, if not always for the artistic value of his films, then at least for his almost unique ability to sense and supply public taste, nearly always in Germany, often worldwide. He did what producers were supposed to do.

Eichinger headed Constantin Film, one of Germany's most successful production and distribution companies. He produced films such as *The Name of the Rose* (1986), the *Resident Evil* franchise, *Downfall* (2004) and *The Baader Meinhof Complex* (2008). Add to these German superhits like 2001's *Der Schuh des Manitu* (the most successful German film of all time) and you have someone fairly unique: a German producer whose films were made on the strength of box-office success rather than money cobbled together from the plethora of 'soft' German production funds.

Well-known European producers – names a cinephile might recognise, such as Georges de Beauregard and Anatole Dauman in France, Dino de Laurentiis in Italy (but mainly in Hollywood), Elías Querejeta (briefly) in Spain – have been in short supply because the European funding system has tended latterly to reduce them to the role of number crunchers whose job it is to assemble production money from a patchwork of sources and leave the limelight to their directors. In Hollywood the hierarchy goes: star, producer, director. In Europe it's: director, star, producer. By the time it gets to the end of the list, there's not much limelight left.

There is, of course, no 'correct' hierarchy. But the uncertain role of the producer outside Hollywood is unfortunate. At the time of *Chariots of Fire*'s Oscar in the early 1980s, I talked to a number of producers for this magazine and came to the conclusion that we had a severe shortage of them. That continued for a while, enabling David (now Lord) Puttnam to corner the market in producerhood, much as Danny Boyle has since been able to corner it in directorhood. But by the end of the 1980s, the UK was



By the end of the 80s, the UK was awash with producers, all pointing to the artistic aims at the heart of their business plans

awash with producers, all pointing to the artistic aims at the heart of their business plans. Directors, meanwhile, all began to talk like producers, wanting to be seen as serious business persons in an age when monetary value was your only man.

It was a cycle. It was the film industry. It didn't last. But that period coincided with the launching of the European (mainly German) film funds, and with a drastic redefinition of the producer's role. In the movie business, the words 'producer' and 'product' are (or should be) intimately related; that, after all, is how the classic Hollywood producers, from Irving Thalberg to Scott Rudin, have worked: they mediate between the artistic vision of the director and the commercial considerations that make that vision saleable. That's in an ideal world; in the less than ideal world into which Hollywood all too often descends, they bully. But the shared work with the director (and writer) is key. Between them, in the utopia to which the studio system aspired, they would make meaningful movies that sold millions of tickets.

In Europe today it's different. Shift the focus to the fund-raising stage, where most European producers now operate, and the product-shaping part of the job becomes secondary. The producers assemble the jigsaw of euros that makes European filmmaking possible – film after film at last month's Berlinale began with a mosaic of logos and names of film funds that had put money into the production – and leave the director to get on with making the film.

The notion that the director (and the writer) should be given the freedom to say what they want to say

in the way that they want to say it is integral to film culture (and would be part of this magazine's mission statement, if it had one). But to be absolute about that is to denigrate on the one hand the collaborative nature of filmmaking – an exercise in assembling elements that do not always behave in predictable ways – and, on the other, the vast gamble that every filmmaker takes that the footage that has been shot will cohere into a film that will not exist until all of it has been edited together. It is not like writing a novel or directing a play, where rewriting and reshaping can take place right up to (and, in the case of theatre, beyond) the moment it is released into the world. Even the analogy of composing music – where the composer has to 'hear' something that exists only as marks on paper – is unsatisfactory, since the marks can be changed in rehearsal. You can't do that with footage on an editing screen – you can only change the order or alter the balance of existing elements.

That difference between film and other arts is what accounts for the emergence of the producer, a whole new stratum of the creative process that originated in the 1930s with the great studio production chiefs, who then evolved into (and often became) the first independent producers.

Films need producers. German film needed Bernd Eichinger. And it needs someone with the power to take on that role again. For the rest of us, the economic climate is such that it's unlikely to free producers from focusing on finance any time soon. But that will eventually be to the detriment of filmmaking and – in the long run – film culture.

♦♦ Nick Roddick

● **Human Rights Watch Film Festival**, with a global spread of more than 30 films, opens with Denis Villeneuve's 'Incendies' and includes 'The Whistleblower', starring Rachel Weisz as a peacekeeper in post-war Bosnia who uncovers a sex-trafficking ring, and Justin Chadwick's 'The First Grader'. 23 March to 1 April. See www.hrw.org/en/iff

● **Diamanda Galás**, the singer, composer and performer known for her unsettling, operatic voice, has collaborated with Italian filmmaker Davide Pepe on 'Schrei 27'. The 27-minute film follows a person (played by Galás and Salvatore Bevilacqua) taken into a mental hospital and tortured in order to extract a confession. The film screens as part of the Spill Festival of Performance, Barbican, London, 22-23 April.

● **Borderlines**, the UK's largest rural film festival, shows recent films and classic movie matinees at The Courtyard, Hereford, and 36 other remote temporary cinemas in the UK, from church halls to pubs. For details see www.borderlinesfilmfestival.org

● **Flatpack Festival** includes screenings of Thomas Arslan's 'In the Shadows', Kelly Reichardt's 'Meek's Cutoff' (pictured), music videos, a tribute to Iris Barry, and 'In Bed with Chris Needham' – a 'video diary' from 1990 about a teenage heavy metal fan. Various venues, Birmingham, 23-27 March. See www.flatpackfestival.org



● **Kinoteka Film Festival** focuses on Polish cinema old and new. This year it opens with Jerzy Skolimowski's 'Essential Killing', after which the director will attend a Q&A. Other highlights include Przemysław Wojcieszek's 'Made in Poland' and Pawel Sala's 'Mother Teresa of Cats'. Closing it is Henryk Szaro's rediscovered silent classic 'The Strong Man' (1929). Various venues, London, 24 March to 13 April. For details see www.kinoteka.org.uk

● **Minghella Film Festival** is hosted by the family of the late Oscar-winning director, and opens with Kevin Macdonald's 'The Eagle'. Other attractions include a retrospective of films produced by Minghella, new short films and a closing night concert by June Tabor. Various venues, Isle of Wight, 1-13 March.

The received opinion may be that Woody Allen is past his best, but **Brad Stevens** finds intriguing patterns in his recent European work. Overleaf, Allen talks to **James Bell** about his new film 'You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger'

WOODY ALLEN IN THE 21ST CENTURY

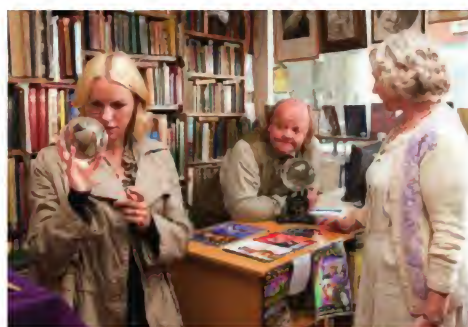
Any attempt to defend the recent films of Woody Allen might profitably begin with the question: what exactly do we mean by 'recent'? Casting an eye over Allen's filmography – which boasts at least one film directed every year since 1982, and a further ten in the years before that – it's surprising to see how few natural breaks it contains, how little sense of change or progress. Anyone wishing to discuss his 'recent' output is thus obliged to select an entirely arbitrary cut-off point – for argument's sake, the start of this century – since, aside from the occasional reference to Obama and Viagra, there seems little reason why *Whatever Works* (2009) couldn't have been made around the same time as *Annie Hall* (1977), rather than 32 years later. Which means that, according to taste, Allen is either incapable of growth, or achieved perfection at a relatively early point in his career.

Although he still has a handful of critical supporters, and tends to be admired by other directors (Monte Hellman, for instance, declared Allen's latest release *You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger* to be the best film he saw in 2010), Allen is clearly no longer as central to cinematic culture as he was in the 1970s and early 80s. In fact two of his 21st-century films, *Hollywood Ending* (2002) and *Scoop* (2006), have never been distributed in the UK, even on DVD. But the films themselves remain full of confidence and vitality. What has changed is the context in which they exist.

Allen's refusal to change is rather different from that of the late Blake Edwards, whose work during the 1980s was fuelled by a sense of estrangement from the wider culture. By contrast, Allen seems almost blithely unaware of the fact that the world around him has altered beyond all recognition – which isn't to say he is not opposed to the dominant trends in US culture, but rather that this opposition has always been part of his shtick as writer, performer and director.

If Allen was as out of synch in the 1970s as he is today, many of his recent films nonetheless evoke memories of that decade (even the lovingly recreated 1940s setting of 2001's *The Curse of the Jade Scorpion* recalls such 70s 'period nostalgia' films as *New York, New York*). Back then, America's cinema portrayed being out of synch as a badge of distinction. But Allen was opposed not only to many of the same things as Martin Scorsese, Dennis Hopper and Hal Ashby (militarism, conservatism, misogyny), but also to several things those directors enthusiastically advocated (rock music, alternative lifestyles, the avant garde). And this attitude has now been transplanted into the 21st century: see the parody of experimental theatre in *Small Time Crooks* (2000), the musician who eats a live rat in *Hollywood Ending*, the rock band called 'Anal Sphincter' in *Whatever Works*, etc.

Allen had already shot parts of 1996's *Everyone Says I Love You* in Venice and Paris, but starting ➤



LONDON STORIES
'You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger', with an ensemble cast including Naomi Watts, top, and Freida Pinto, below, is the fourth film to be shot in the UK by Woody Allen, opposite





Woody Allen You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger

with 2005's *Match Point*, he has made six of his last seven films in Europe (including the forthcoming *Midnight in Paris*, due out later this year). Logically this decision to abandon New York and change continents should have been a major turning point. Yet as the splendid *You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger* demonstrates, even this geographical split is mostly theoretical: the romanticised London, bathed in shades of autumnal brown, seen here and in *Scoop* looks strikingly similar to the New York of *Manhattan* (1979) and *Hannah and Her Sisters* (1986), but at the same time very different from the London of *Match Point* and *Cassandra's Dream* (2007), in which it is transformed into a bleak, minimalist stage for games of concealment and deception (and bears a curious resemblance to the 1960s London of Polanski and Antonioni). Which suggests that Allen's New York (so different from Scorsese's or Ferrara's) was just as 'unreal' and artificial a space as the overtly abstract settings of *Stardust Memories* (1980) and *Shadows and Fog* (1991). How appropriate that several of his films have been made for a studio named 'DreamWorks'.

A more obvious division exists between those films organised around Allen's star image – including the ones, such as *Celebrity* (1998) and *Whatever Works*, in which the obvious 'Woody' role is taken by another actor – and those that focus on groups of characters – including several, such as *Hannah and Her Sisters*, *Crimes and Misdemeanors* (1989) and *Husbands and Wives* (1992), in which Allen appears as one of the ensemble. *You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger* belongs firmly in the latter category, making use of a tactic Allen favours when working in this mode: the films convey a sense of looseness as they intercut scenes from the lives of individuals linked by familial or romantic ties, but at the same time are tightly structured around a simple thematic core.

In the new film, this 'theme' is the suggestion that our chances of being happy or sad, successful or unsuccessful, alive or dead, are always fifty-fifty; even the eponymous "tall dark stranger" may be either the romantic ideal of prophecy – or the Grim Reaper (whose 'living' embodiment is another Allen motif). Revisiting territory staked out by *Match Point* and *Whatever Works*, with their emphasis on the role chance plays in our existence, *You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger* refuses to resolve its various narrative strands, abandoning them at moments of crisis or promise, when it's impossible to say whether things will work out well or badly.

Deconstructing Woody

Just as the New York films and the abstract nightmare films represent different sides of Allen's personality, so too might both the star vehicles and group projects represent different strategies for the director to liberate himself from his onscreen persona. In part, this liberation seems to be motivated by a need to eliminate, or at least minimise, that persona's ethnic overtones. Even as late as the

'Oedipus Wrecks' episode of *New York Stories* (1989), the Allen character's involvement with non-Jewish women was defined as problematic. But as the male protagonist's sexual relationships with women of a younger generation took over as the new 'problem', this concern with ethnicity was allowed to fade: the Jewishness of Sondra Pransky (Scarlett Johansson) in *Scoop* is established only to motivate a few one-liners, while nothing is made of interracial relationships in *Melinda and Melinda* (2004) or *Dia* (Freida Pinto)'s ethnic background in *You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger*.

In this respect, Woody Allen's career bears a striking resemblance to that of Clint Eastwood, another American auteur of roughly the same generation (he was born in 1930, Allen in 1935) whose annual directorial efforts often attempt to redefine his image as a performer – an image that can be reworked, deconstructed, criticised and parodied, but never entirely escaped. (For the record, Eastwood has directed ten features since 2000, acting in four of them; Allen has made 12 films during this period, acting in five.) But whereas Eastwood the actor's persona, which represented an ideal of rugged masculinity, gave Eastwood the director something to react against, Allen's already embodied a critique of traditional masculinity, which is why his attempts to redefine it are less clearly motivated, and thus necessarily more shadowy. This perhaps explains my impression that his films cannot be understood individually – an impression reinforced by their repeated motifs (magic tricks, independent young women, embodiments of death, groups of nostalgic men), actors, narratives, characters, structural experiments and variations on found texts (Fellini's 8½ in *Stardust Memories*, Monicelli's *Big Deal on Madonna Street*/I soliti ignoti in *Small Time Crooks*, Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* in *Match Point*).

When viewed as a group, films that – taken individually – could hardly seem any clearer or less ambiguous in their intentions begin to feel mysterious and fragmented, diverse parts of a whole whose contours can be glimpsed only as the various pieces of the puzzle fall into place. Sometimes these 'pieces' appear to be part of an almost abstract system: the jewel thefts carried out by the characters in both *Small Time Crooks* and *The Curse of the Jade Scorpion*, the magic lantern that appears in both sections of *Melinda and Melinda*, the women who realise they are gifted photographers as soon as they become part of a *ménage à trois* in *Vicki Cristina Barcelona* (2008) and *Whatever Works*. The repetition of mundane details suggests that the line between each film is less than absolute.

But looking at the films in these terms also reveals ambitious attempts to interrogate the divisions between genres. It's hardly unusual to find a director making a comedy one year and a drama the next, yet what's striking about Allen's comedies and dramas is that they frequently make use of similar material. Thus *Melinda and Melinda*, ➔

A GOOD BET

Woody Allen talks to **James Bell** about filming in London, living in a godless universe – and why he's pessimistic about everything in life, except his work

You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger marks the fourth time the iconic New Yorker Woody Allen has filmed in London in the space of six years. An ensemble drama, not without its moments of comedy, it follows the romantic and familial entanglements of several characters including Sally (Naomi Watts), a gallery assistant stuck in a failing marriage with washed-up American writer Roy (Josh Brolin). Sally has fallen for her boss Greg (Antonio Banderas), and Roy in turn has fallen for their neighbour Dia (Freida Pinto), a musicology student he spies undressing through his window. The marriage of Sally's parents Helena (Gemma Jones) and Alfie (Anthony Hopkins) has also recently broken down, with Helena seeking solace through a fortune-teller (Pauline Collins), and Alfie acting out his mid-life crisis by falling for gold-digging escort Charmaine (Lucy Punch).

James Bell: '*You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger*' depicts a broader cross-section of London life than, say, your first London film '*Match Point*'. Did that come from having worked in London and got to know it better?

Woody Allen: No, I think that's just a happy coincidence. I don't really know London better. I always knew it a little bit, as it's not a difficult place to know for a New Yorker. London's a very enjoyable place to shoot, because it's temperate, the crews are very good, the acting pool is remarkable, the skies are sufficiently grey, so the photography looks pretty.

JB: Gemma Jones is particularly good as Helena. There's a foolishness to her character – in her belief in the fortune-teller – and yet she's happier because of it. You've long mocked such quackery in your films, and yet is there some envy on your part towards people who can believe in it?

WA: I don't take that optimistic view. Yes, Helena is able to maintain her balance by investing her emotions in a fake and fraudulent psychic fortune-teller, and I do believe that belief in anything is better than no belief at all. But no belief at all is the true state of affairs. If you face reality with honesty, you're facing a world that is meaningless. It's a godless universe. That's very painful and terrifying, but that's unfortunately the way it is.

Helena's infatuation with the fortune-teller is no different than somebody's infatuation with any of the major religions, which are no less specious. They all serve the purpose of deceiving the believer sufficiently to enable him or her to get through life without constantly being anxious about the terrifying and unenviable position everyone is in.

JB: You've made six films in Europe in recent years. Do you think that on the whole you feel closer to a European sensibility than an American one?

WA: I've always felt close to a European sensibility. It's a happy accident: when I was a young man and most impressionable, all these great European

When viewed as a group, Allen's recent films begin to feel mysterious and fragmented, diverse parts of a whole



SMALL AND PALE

Woody Allen directs Naomi Watts as Sally, the Londoner at the centre of romantic entanglements in his new film 'You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger'

films were flooding New York City. I was very influenced by those films. It comes out in my work without trying to. It's like if you grow up hearing Mozart your whole life at home and you start to write music, probably what comes out – until you develop your own style – is an imitation of Mozart, to some degree. And that's what happened with me and films. I've very often relied on European cinema as a crutch or as a guide.

JB: Have those filmmakers remained the major influence, or do you seek out other, contemporary filmmakers?

WA: That kind of thing I find is indelible. The films I grew up with – Bergman and Fellini and Kurosawa and De Sica and Antonioni – just left an indelible mark on me. It's the same with certain American films that impressed me as a young boy, like *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* and *Citizen Kane* and *Double Indemnity*. There have been very few American films since that have equalled the impact those films had on me, because I do think the time that you see them figures into it.

Consequently my films have been well appreciated in Europe, more than the United States, where it's been so-so.

JB: But why do you think the American influence in your work – from Preston Sturges, the Marx Brothers and others such as the films you mentioned – hasn't maintained an appreciation of your work in the States?

WA: I think those kind of films are gone – they're history. Films from that era and with that sophistication – Sturges, who you mentioned, and also I was a great fan of Ernst Lubitsch – they don't

resonate with most audiences in the United States. We have an audience – and it is an intelligent audience – that is more technological.

It's true what Marshall McLuhan said – “the medium is the message” – and the technology is the message, so you see films that are, in a certain sense, not apparently about anything. They may have silly plots, and there's not much of a story, but they are about a technology. They are about the editing, about the special effects – that is the content of the film. And people enjoy it. They'll say: “There wasn't much of a story,” or, “The jokes were dumb, but I kind of enjoyed it” – and what they're enjoying is the technology.

JB: You've acted less frequently in your films over the past ten years. Are you tired of performing?

WA: Oh no, not at all. It's only because I can't find parts for myself. When you get older, you can't be the romantic interest, and because I can't, I'm then suddenly playing the character's father, the psychiatrist, the college professor – something peripheral to the main action of the movie. So when I shot this last movie I made, *Midnight in Paris*, if this was years ago, I would have certainly played the lead character, without question. But I'm too old to play it, so I got Owen Wilson.

I don't like to write something for myself specifically, because that's not how you write. I write the best idea I have, and if the best idea doesn't include me, then that's too bad. Now, in the picture I'm making this summer, in Rome, there may be something for me, but I don't know yet, because I'm not finished with the script. Once you can't play the love interest any more, the whole thing becomes difficult. It's like Clint Eastwood not being able to play the macho hero any more.

London's a very enjoyable place to shoot, because the acting pool is remarkable – and the skies are sufficiently grey

JB: Do you think 'You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger' is a film you could have made 20 years ago?

WA: No, because I think that my films have developed over the years. They've gone from films that started out just as strips of jokes and funny gags to more character-oriented things – slightly deeper stories where I've sacrificed some laughs. And sometimes I've tried to make serious pictures without laughs at all. *Tall Dark Stranger* is probably a film I wouldn't have been able to make 20 years ago, because I feel I wouldn't have had the depth to make it. I'm forever pessimistic about everything in life, except my work. I feel that my best work is still to come, and I keep working and trying. It may be foolish and misplaced optimism, but nevertheless I'm optimistic.

JB: Making a film a year, year after year, do you ever stop and look back and see your work as having developed in phases? Or is it more of a steady progression?

WA: I feel I've always progressed. I've always made the film I wanted to make that year, and the films I made later were better than the ones I made earlier. *Manhattan* and *Annie Hall* were quite popular, but they were not as good as, say, *Match Point*, which was a better film than both of those films. *Midnight in Paris* I think will be seen as a better film. *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* is a better film than those I made years ago.

But it's capricious. I get an idea for a film and I do it, and if I'm right in my judgement, and in execution, then the film turns out to be a good film, a step forward. If I guessed wrong and I thought the idea was wonderful and it's really not, or I execute badly, then the film is not such a good film. But it doesn't have to do with the chronology.

JB: You recently wrote a play for the theatre, 'Sdelka'. Do you harbour any other unfulfilled artistic ambitions?

WA: I'm very happy doing films. I wrote a novel, but it didn't come out well and I put it away. I would like to write for the theatre again, and I will continue to write for *The New Yorker*. But I don't have to knock myself out to do one film a year – a year's a long time to make a film. I don't make these films like, say, Steven Spielberg, where I take three years and a hundred million dollars. My films are much less ambitious.

It's easy for me. I finish a film, and I'm sitting around the house and have other ideas; I get them together and I write them. I don't require much money to make a film, so it's not hard for me to get funded. And I'm a good bet for an investor, because I work fast and inexpensively. And when the film is released, before you know it, the small amount that it cost, they've made back.

Then once in a while, if I hit one that is popular – like *Match Point*, which made a hundred million dollars – then everybody makes a lot of money on it. Everybody except me.

Woody Allen You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger



BETHEL POSTERS AND DESIGNS (3)

CITY BREAK
 'Whatever Works'; top, returned Woody Allen to New York after three films in Europe with Scarlett Johansson: 'Vicki Cristina Barcelona', 'Scoop' and 'Match Point'

which intercuts comic and tragic versions of the same story, functions as a guide to reading Allen's next two films, which both deal explicitly with the class system and involve males who murder women in order to preserve privileged positions within that system: in *Match Point*, the story is told as a melodrama (and ends with the killer getting away with his crime); in *Scoop*, it's told as a comedy (and ends with the killer being brought to justice).

Instead of using comic subplots to counterpoint the main action, Allen divides humour and drama into distinct categories, making either pure comedies, straight dramas or films such as *Crimes and Misdemeanors* and *Melinda and Melinda*, in which comedy and drama are treated as alternatives that must be rigorously separated – a process already evident in Allen's directorial debut *What's up, Tiger Lily?* (1966), where the 'serious' image (another 'found' text, taken from a Japanese thriller) was totally divorced from the comic soundtrack.

Yet the barriers erected in one area often seem to compensate for those being torn down elsewhere. In the book *The Films of Mike Leigh*, Ray Carney complains that Allen's most interesting characters all sound "like little Woody Allens". But this might be one of the most fascinating things about them, turning films that might otherwise appear easily legible into ghostly texts wherein attempts to keep various elements neatly confined rub shoulders with a chaotic splintering, causing identities to be doubled, refracted, sent spinning from one actor to another. Take *Hannah and Her Sisters*, for example, in which most of the major characters (Michael Caine's nervously romantic Elliot, Max von Sydow's pessimistic intellectual Frederick, Mia Farrow's star performer Hannah, Dianne Wiest's neurotically insecure Holly) embody different aspects of Allen's persona, while Allen himself occupies his own isolated corner of the larger narrative (into which he can only be integrated, in the final shot, as a reflection in a mirror). As the distinctions between his nominally discreet characters blur, Allen's frequently rigid, even one-dimensional individuals begin to seem unexpectedly fluid.

From this perspective, *Zelig* (1983) – about a man who alters his personality and appearance in order to fit in with whomever he encounters – is surely the key title. But fragments of the *Zelig* experience can be found in most of Allen's 21st-century films too: *Melinda and Melinda*, whose heroine (played by Radha Mitchell) fluctuates according to the requirements not just of two conflicting genres, but also of two sets of supporting players; or *Match Point*, whose protagonist Chris (Jonathan Rhys Meyers) goes to various performative extremes – losing his Irish accent, acquiring cultural knowledge, staging a double murder so that it seems to be the result of an interrupted burglary – in order to create, maintain and defend an artificially constructed identity.

Or take *Vicki Cristina Barcelona*, which begins with a voiceover narration expressing uncertainty as to whether Vicki (Rebecca Hall) and Cristina (Scarlett Johansson) are total opposites or variations on the same dilemma. It then spends most of its running time observing how the two women shift and mutate under the influence of other characters and settings: Vicki's fiancé tells her that she

is "a whole different person" in Barcelona, while Cristina becomes the "missing ingredient" that allows the relationship between Maria Elena (Penélope Cruz) and Juan Antonio (Javier Bardem) to briefly achieve harmony. But in the end, the narrative returns both Vicki and Cristina to their starting point, virtually unchanged.

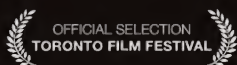
Playing a role

What all this appears to be leading up to is the emergence of a formal structure of precisely the kind Allen is widely assumed to be uninterested in, but which might connect him with such masters of paranoia and theatrical role-playing as Orson Welles, Fritz Lang and Jacques Rivette, for whom identity is never set in stone, but always a work in progress, subject to the vagaries of improvisation, disguise and conspiracy.

In general, though, despite his frequent evocations of Fellini and Bergman, Allen has few stylistic connections with other filmmakers. *Bullets over Broadway* (1994) is almost entirely constructed as a series of sequence shots, an approach that has its roots in the earliest cinematic experiments, and suggests an affinity with some of the most ambitious European and Asian directors of the last two decades (Theo Angelopoulos, Hou Hsiao-Hsien, Béla Tarr, Tsai Ming-Liang). There's also a striking moment in *Anything Else* (2003) – when, in the middle of a complex long take, Jason Biggs and Christina Ricci move out of camera range, leaving us looking at an empty space for 15 seconds – that feels like a consciously modernist strategy. But Allen would seem to have found his way to these stylistic conclusions through another route entirely – one that has less to do with cinema than with music, theatre and literature. Critics have picked up on this in various ways, one *Variety* reviewer claiming that *Zelig* was "like one of Allen's *New Yorker* pieces come to staggering life", while *The Guardian's* Peter Bradshaw recently suggested "thinking of each new film as a short story... a growing anthology of bittersweet, gently ruminative *jeux d'esprit*".

Allen has often insisted he would be quite happy not making films, instead concentrating on playing jazz or writing. And if he is constantly both withdrawing from and reviving his persona, it may be that this is simply the outward sign of his approach to cinema, his remarkable productivity somehow linked to a sheer lack of interest in the medium. Allen functions more like a novelist or playwright, working in a form that remains alien to him, but with which he has nonetheless reached an accommodation. Film is perhaps the most flexible of all the arts, easily able to assimilate the visions of artists (Norman Mailer, Bob Dylan, Jean Cocteau, David Mamet) who 'belong' to other creative realms. The most frequently noted division in Allen's oeuvre (it was itself the subject of a running joke in *Stardust Memories*) is that between the "early funny ones" and the more serious later works. But perhaps the real joke is that one of America's most prolific filmmakers has remained tirelessly productive simply because he was never a filmmaker in the first place. Now that's funny!

■ 'You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger' is released on 18 March, and is reviewed on page 82



“A SWOON OF PLEASURE”

Peter Bradshaw, THE GUARDIAN

“BEAUTIFUL & BEGUILING”

Hannah Lack, DAZED & CONFUSED



ノルウエイの森
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY **HARUKI MURAKAMI**

NORWEGIAN WOOD

15 CONTAINS STRONG SEX
AND SUICIDE REFERENCES

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY **TRAN ANH HUNG**

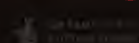
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Reader offers

COMPETITIONS

FRENCH CINEMA: Five books to be won

In *The Faber Book of French Cinema*, Charles Drazin offers engaging portraits of key figures of French cinema. Beginning with the country's early pioneers, such as the Lumière brothers, Georges Méliès and Charles Pathé, the book also covers the Golden Age of distinctive filmmakers such as

Jean Renoir, Marcel Pagnol and Sachy Guitry, the New Wave directors typified by Truffaut and Godard, and then brings the story right up to date by looking at films such as Jacques Audiard's award-winning *A Prophet*. We have five copies of the book to give away.

To be in with a chance of winning, please answer the following question:

Q. For which film was François Truffaut nominated for a Golden Lion in Venice?

- a. The 400 Blows
- b. Fahrenheit 451
- c. Jules et Jim



WIN

MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI: 'Le amiche' and 'La signora senza camelie'

Masters of Cinema present, in dual-format DVD and Blu-ray for the first time in the UK, Michelangelo Antonioni's *Le amiche* (*The Girlfriends*) and *La signora senza camelie* (*The Lady Without Camelias*). The former is the story of a woman setting up a fashion salon in Turin who finds herself caught up in the melodramas of a bourgeoisie circle of acquaintances. In the latter, shop clerk (Lucia Bosé) finds herself cast in a small movie role that propels her into becoming a screen siren. Bonus material includes introductions from critic Gabe Klinger. We have three pairs to give away.

To be in with a chance of winning, please answer the following question:

Q. Which one of these Antonioni films stars Lucia Bosé?

- a. *Le amiche*
- b. *Story of a Love Affair*
- c. *I vinti*



WIN

JOHN KRISH: Three collections to be won

Until last autumn, John Krish was one of British cinema's best-kept secrets – an unsung master of post-war documentary filmmaking.

Now, as part of the BFI's Boom Britain project, *A Day in the Life* – a film quartet of some of the director's most cherished work – is celebrated by the BFI with a dual-format edition release.

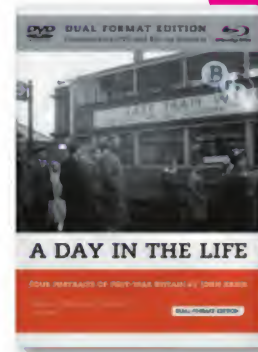
The films are: *The Elephant Will Never Forget* (1953), a poetic farewell to London's trams; *They Took Us to the Sea* (1961), a poignant record of a seaside outing for disadvantaged children; *Our School* (1962), charting the aspirations of young school-leavers; and *I Think They Call Him John* (1964), a moving account of the life of an elderly widower.

Bonus material includes short films and a 2010 interview with Krish.

To be in with a chance of winning, please answer the following question:

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Every year, towards the end of the Berlinale, one or other of my colleagues will say, "Isn't this the worst Berlin competition ever?" To which I reply, "You said that last year." The reasons why the Berlin standard is nearly always pretty dire are well known: better films have hopes of being shown at Cannes; Berlin is addicted to issue-driven message films; its programmers have lax taste, etc. Before I began coming here (more than ten years ago), I'm told that people found refuge from the competition in the more refreshing and radical selections of the Forum, but these days that too is a mostly feeble showcase (see sidebar, p.26). Which leaves only the mainstream-oriented Panorama as a place to graze for surprises. We've complained about this scenario before, so I don't want to dwell on it, especially as this year's Berlinale turned out to be enjoyable despite it all. The 'out of competition' strand, for instance, gave us some fascinating 3D experiences, and amidst the competition also-rans, there were a handful of really exceptional films that – gratifyingly – won all the prizes.

Chief of these was Béla Tarr's spectacle of bleakness **A Torinói Ló (The Turin Horse)**, which won the Silver Bear Jury Grand Prix – and which the director has declared will be his last film. It begins with an anecdote told over a black screen: "In Turin on 3rd January, 1889, Friedrich Nietzsche steps out of the doorway of number six, Via Carlo Albert. Not far from him, the driver of a handsome cab is having trouble with a stubborn horse.

Despite all his urging, the horse refuses to move, whereupon the driver loses his patience and takes a whip to it. Nietzsche comes up to the throng and puts an end to the brutal scene, throwing his arms around the horse's neck, sobbing."

We learn that thereafter Nietzsche was demented and silent – and then we see the horse. It's pulling a battered cart, driven by a bedraggled man with one useless arm – perhaps he was once the cabbie. In the back of the cart sits a young woman swaddled in rags. A fierce wind is howling; melancholy arpeggios churn; the horse seems huge in glittering, high-contrast monochrome as it strains to pull its burden uphill.

We reach a hilltop farm, and there we will stay with the man, his daughter and the sick horse for seven days (or 30 dazzling Steadicam shots), during which time the wind never drops. The daily round involves the daughter dressing the father, fetching water from the well, the eating of unpeeled hot potatoes and the drinking of Pálinka. It's interrupted only by a visit from a seer who wants some of that Pálinka – and delivers a withering description of his era and its fate – and by a band of gypsies, who want water. There's not much dialogue, and plenty of relentless concentration on the gradual subtraction of hope from the everyday, until darkness reigns. It's an astonishing film, the best clue to its theme probably to be found in

TROUBLE AND STRIFE

'Nader and Simin, A Separation', above left, won the Golden Bear, while 'Sleeping Sickness', right, and 'The Turin Horse', opposite, picked up Silver Bears

section 125 in Book Three of Nietzsche's *The Gay Science*, in which a madman with a lit lantern goes in daylight to the market-place searching for God, before declaring to the crowd: "God is dead... and we have killed him."

Nothing could be in greater contrast to Tarr's film than the Golden Bear winner, Asghar Farhadi's **Jodaeiye Nader Az Simin (Nader and Simin, A Separation)**, a tense Iranian ensemble drama full of incident. When his wife Simin moves out, Nader has to find someone else to look after his senile father during the day. Razieh, a devout Muslim who happens to be pregnant, agrees to take the job; but when the old man wets himself, she is anguished by the question of whether or not cleaning him up will be a sin. One day Nader comes home to find his father lying on the bedroom floor with his arm tied to the bed; there's also money missing from a drawer. When Razieh returns, Nader throws her out quite forcibly. But then he learns that she's had a miscarriage, and before long he finds himself accused of murder.

This compelling, intricate drama maintains a delicate balance between the various pulls of faith, honour, pride and justice as emotions shoot back and forth, and everyone involved risks eventual doom. Far superior to *About Elly*, the film that made Farhadi's name in Berlin two years ago, *Nader and Simin* combines the intrigue of a legal drama with the high emotion of a family tragedy and the passion of a religious parable. Deservedly, the actors as a group picked up both the male and female acting awards. ➡

BERLIN

HORSE LATITUDES

Nick James sees all the sound and fury of this year's Berlin festival—from Shakespeare to terrorism to 3D—left in the shade by Béla Tarr's tale of a man, a girl and a horse, while overleaf, **Carmen Gray** scours the Forum for hidden gems



UNDER THREAT

With slim pickings among the features on show at this year's Berlin Forum, Carmen Gray finds a strong communal theme among the documentaries

The more stylistically daring films in this year's Berlin Forum were all from East Asia, the stand-out being Japanese director Zeze Takahisa's visually arresting fiction *Heaven's Story*, which draws on masked-theatre traditions. A girl, whose family was wiped out by a now-dead psychopath, waits in vain for a man who's suffered similarly to enact his sworn revenge. When she reaches adulthood, she acts for him, thus setting in train nine years of murders and vengeance, touching many characters in an epic weave of intersecting threads, where morality is always grey. This hugely ambitious examination of the human impulse to kill is a bold choice for a director who made his name in softcore 'pink films', mixing profundity with a leavening of black wit. Yet at four-and-a-half hours, it pushes endurance, and flounders somewhat towards the end.

The other gem was the innovative, complexly layered and poetic South Korean documentary *Cheonggyecheon Medley: A Dream Of Iron*, the feature debut of director Kelvin Kyung Kun Park. It focuses on Seoul's Cheonggyecheon district, a hub of scrap-metal workshops now threatened by gentrification. Couched as a near-ritualistic palliative to the unease caused by Korea's pace of post-war industrialisation, the film blends archival footage with the observed rhythms of metalwork. The director's voiceover, addressed to his father, speaks of a recurrent nightmare of iron-tasting blood, and of folk belief that metal is

'Cheonggyecheon Medley' blends archival footage with the observed rhythms of metalwork



HAUNTED BY THE PAST

The Japanese *'Heaven's Story'*, above, is an epic of vengeance, while *'Cheonggyecheon Medley'* documents South Korea's vanishing industry

a bad omen – a ruthless substance of the earth with strength but no spirituality.

Dutch director Tom Fassaert's elegantly dour yet quaintly eccentric black-and-white documentary *De Engel van Doel* (*An Angel in Doel*) follows a tiny Flemish village similarly terrorised by 'progress'. Slated for demolition, Doel is slowly abandoned, but the elderly, stubborn Emilienne refuses to budge from her home, and her kitchen table becomes the hub of neighbourhood talk. The inhabitants' startling mix of earthy pragmatism and wry, otherworldly musings form a curious portrait of generational mortality.

Less stylistically accomplished but hugely entertaining, Czech director Erika Hníková's documentary *Nesvatbav* (*Matchmaking Mayor*) centres on another village in decline, Slovakia's Zemplinske. Having taken to micro-managing the town through its Soviet-era loudspeaker system, the ex-army mayor endeavours to pair off unmarried thirtysomethings at a ball. Though Hníková is content to milk the eccentricities of small-town life – not least the gaudy kitsch of home interiors – her warm humanism ensures that the humour never feels condescending.

One of the few sure-handed fiction works on show was US mumblecore director Joe Swanberg's *Silver Bullets*. Swanberg himself plays filmmaker Ethan, who provocatively casts Charlie (Amy Seimetz) – best friend of his girlfriend Claire (Kate Lyn Sheil) – as his lover in the film he's shooting. It all plays out as inconsequentially and solipsistically as expected, but a section about the B-grade werewolf film Claire is acting in is buoyant with light, talky wit. Would that there had been more whole films like that on show.



◀ The jury was also right to pick out Ulrich Köhler for the Best Director prize. *Schlafkrankheit* (*Sleeping Sickness*), his Conradian portrait of a burnt-out white man addicted to Africa, surprised constantly with an oblique approach to mood and storytelling that seemed to mimic the continent's unknowability. A hard-to-like German doctor (played with an epic sense of exhaustion by Pierre Bokma) is preparing to leave Africa with his family after 20 years' service, but finds he cannot go. Two years later, a visiting black Frenchman (Jean-Christophe Folly) discovers that the doctor has now become part of the corruption against which he once rallied.

The other German films in competition all disappointed. Baader-Meinhof films arrive, it seems, like buses. This year's effort, *Wer Wenn Nicht Wir* (*If Not Us, Who*), charts the relationship of future terrorist Gudrun Ensslin (played by the muscular Lena Lauzemis) and her first love, radical novelist Bernward Vesper (August Diehl). Documentarist Andres Veiel makes a ponderous trial of his fiction debut, with all his evidence seeming to imply in the end that Ensslin became a terrorist simply because Andreas Baader (Alexander Fehling) was better in the sack than Vesper.

You won't hear Shakespeare better spoken on screen than in Ralph Fiennes's ambitious production of *Coriolanus*. Both Fiennes himself in the lead and Vanessa Redgrave as his mother Volumnia make their most important speeches feel vital. But this tragedy of the ferociously brave Roman general who is despised by his own people and too



Wenders makes so many of the dancers' moves even more spectacular with swooping crane shots

WHAT A PERFORMANCE

From left: Ralph Fiennes as 'Coriolanus'; Pina Bausch's dance filmed by Wim Wenders in 'Pina'; Brendan Gleeson and Don Cheadle in 'The Guard'

proud to woo them founders on its attempts to reach for modern-dress significance through computer war-games analogies and news broadcasts in iambic pentameter. This sort of thing works much better on stage than in cinema – though Mathieu Amalric's brisk new adaptation of Corneille's *L'Illusion comique*, for instance, makes lighter weather of it (see p.9). And besides, the military codes of honour at stake here no longer apply in the modern world, for the simple reason that today's generals don't lead from the front, as they did in ancient times.

Of the more promising-sounding titles at the festival, the most pedestrian was artist-filmmaker Miranda July's *The Future*. I have to confess that July's painfully contrived kooky indie persona and its incipient drippy sentimentality have always turned me off, but at least her feature debut *Me and You and Everyone We Know* was sometimes funny. The audience I saw *The Future* with laughed only once. The scenario is about a kooky neurotic couple, Sophie (July) and Jason (Hamish Linklater), who are worried that they've missed their moment in life. They try to take in a foundling cat, but are made to wait until the shelter thinks it's well enough to be collected. The couple's attempts to avoid the rut of normality lead Sophie towards an affair with a suburban businessman (David Warshofsky), which Jason tries to prevent by stop-

ping time itself. There's hype about the film being narrated by the cat, but this happens rarely – and feels like it was a post-shoot idea to make a deadly film more interesting.

One highlight at Berlin this year was the 3D day, which began with Michel Ocelot's silhouette-animation collection of children's fairytales, *Les Contes de la nuit* (*Tales of the Night*). Though inventive in an orientalist register, they are mostly a little too sweet and PC, all delivered with a certain *très jolie* condescension.

I was much more enthralled by Wim Wenders's *Pina*, his tribute to the late Pina Bausch and her Wuppertal Tanztheater troupe, of huge renown in the world of dance. Shot from angles that Bausch herself could not have imagined, and happy to fragment her trademark pieces – 'Café Müller', last seen on the big screen in Almodóvar's *Talk to Her*, 'The Rite of Spring' et al – into phantom-like segments of 3D that spill out from the screen and vanish at the margins, it's not always a respectful documentary performance film. Indeed Wenders takes liberties with the work of a dancer much concerned with claustrophobic moods and minimalist settings by staging her pieces outside in streets and spectacular landscapes. But none of these purist concerns can get in the way of the sheer thrill of watching these dancers at work and seeing how Wenders makes so many of their moves even more spectacular with graceful editing and swooping crane shots. Despite all this, however, the most beautiful moment in the film is – perhaps tellingly – a 2D black-and-white clip of

Bausch herself dancing to Purcell's 'Dido's Lament', from 'Café Müller'.

You can read about *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, Werner Herzog's fascinating 3D visit to the world's oldest paintings, elsewhere in this issue (see p.28). And as the debate about the limitations of the technology reaches a new pitch, this month's editorial develops arguments from my Berlin 3D experiences, which suggest that the 3D rendering of real events may be a more appropriate use of the technology in the long run than 3D fiction (see p.5).

In any case, after two 3D movies back to back it was with a sense of some relief that I sat down to watch feature debutant John Michael McDonagh's excellent 2D cop comedy *The Guard* in the Panorama section. In a *tour-de-force* role, Brendan Gleeson plays a Galway member of the Garda whose mischievous wit and disguised intelligence make him a one-off maverick loner. After he and his unwanted new sidekick find a murdered man in a holiday flat – clutching a bunch of flowers, with the number 5½ written on the wall – they start to realise that a major drugs gang is in town. Before long, an FBI agent (Don Cheadle) has arrived in town to lecture them. That the members of the gang in question like to spout Nietzsche and are bored by their trade is just one of many wrinkles in the scenario that encourage the chuckles. In fact McDonagh's script is one-liner heaven, making his film the perfect way to forget all the other unmemorable titles I sat through.

■ 'Pina' is released on 22 April

As his first 3D film 'Cave of Forgotten Dreams' reaches our screens, Werner Herzog talks to **Samuel Wigley** about primitive man, albino crocodiles and the ethics of 3D

OUT OF THE DARKNESS

With typical perversity on the part of Werner Herzog, his first (and likely only) foray into 3D forsakes the pulsing immensities of ocean and cosmos – the bread and butter of three-dimensional documentary-making – for the restrictive murk of a cave in the South of France.

Discovered in 1994, the Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc Cave contains the oldest known artworks in the world – pictures of bears, cattle, lions and bison painted on to the cavern walls by early man some 32,000 years ago. Sealed off by rockfall, this prehistoric gallery survived unseen and untarnished for millennia. Even now, its rarefied atmosphere is too fragile to allow public access; the cave hosts an ultra-exclusive private view to which only a select few scientists are invited. All of which sounds like a red rag to a bull for a director like Herzog, whose reputation for filming in far-flung and insurance-policy-voiding conditions needs no introduction – and who claims to have been so possessed by a book he saw at the age of 12 featuring a Lascaux cave painting on its cover that he got a job as a ball boy solely to save up for it. By unique arrangement with the French government, Herzog and a crew of three were granted access to Chauvet – a privilege denied even Judith Thurman, the journalist whose article in *The New Yorker* first piqued the interest of Herzog's producer Erik Nelson.

Last spring, film critic Roger Ebert wrote a polemic in *Newsweek* entitled 'Why I Hate 3D', in which he nonetheless conceded interest in what a filmmaker of Herzog's vision might do with the format, adding that Herzog had promised him that in *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* "nothing would 'approach' the audience". Herzog hasn't exactly kept to that pledge: one scene involving a spear sends up the tawdry tactics of 3D cinema even as it has us dodging it in our seat.

But Ebert was right to be optimistic that Herzog would also light out for less banal territory. His third dimension gives a reach-out-and-touch physicality to the contours and cavities of the stony canvases, bringing us as close as we'll ever be allowed to get to works that – as Herzog reasons – evince the awakening of the soul of man.

Samuel Wigley: How did you go about persuading the French government to allow you access to the Chauvet Cave, where others had failed?

Werner Herzog: Let's say it was a quest of some complexity, because the French are usually territorial when it comes to their patrimony. I was very lucky because the French minister of culture, Frédéric Mitterrand, turned out to be a great fan of my films. When I met him, I was just about to explain my project when he asked to have the first word and for ten minutes spoke about how deeply moved he had been by my films. So [I was] like the little girl in the fairytale who opens her apron and golden stars fall into her lap.

SM: Did he talk about any of your films in particular?

WH: He knew my films from very, very early on, and he said he even interviewed me once for French television! I said, "*Monsieur le ministre*, I do not remember." There was then a straightforward attitude that I would work as an employee of the Ministry of Culture. I would ask for €1 as my fee, and the French government could use the film in 40,000 classrooms in France – everything non-commercial, everything in perpetuity, for no money, for nothing. So there was a proposal that apparently made sense to the French government. But of course there's more than just the Ministry of Culture, there's also a regional government that has to give its OK, and then there is the curator, the custodian of the cave delegated by the scientists... So it took a while. I think my enthusiasm was kind of convincing, otherwise I wouldn't have made the film.

SW: They imposed a lot of restrictions on you while you were shooting inside the cave.

This is my dictum: you can shoot a porno film in 3D, but you cannot film a romantic comedy in 3D

WH: Yes sure, but understandably so. You see, from the first moment of this cave's discovery, the three discoverers did everything right. They sealed the cave instantly. They would only move [around in there] by rolling out and walking on a strip of plastic foil – every single step was done right.

You have to see it in the light of other caves, like the famous cave of Lascaux, which had to be locked down completely because too many tourists went in and left mould growing on the wall from their human exhalations. The same happened to a famous cave in Spain, Altamira. So these restrictions are completely understandable. You do not step off a metal walkway that is two feet wide, because when you step off there are human footprints 32,000 years old and charcoal and whatever other forms of evidence – the cave was completely hermetically sealed for tens of thousands of years.

SW: How did you find the atmosphere inside the cave? There were toxic gases.

WH: You do not sense the CO₂ gas, but after an hour or so you feel woozy. There are guards with you and they keep measuring the level of toxic gas and make sure they move you out soon enough. There are safety precautions, gas masks and oxygen tanks, all sorts of things. In another part of the cave is a fairly high concentration of radon gas – this has a cumulative effect, so you don't stay too long.

SW: What was your reaction to seeing the paintings for the first time?

WH: Well, stunned! Completely and utterly stunned. I had seen photographs – there are two books of photos out. I had some idea what I was going to see. But seeing it in there, in this silence where you can hear your own heartbeat, is really, really something very special. And besides, two things caught me unawares: I had no idea how beautiful the cave was, with all its stalagmites and stalactites, nor how many bones there were – 4,000 bones, mostly from cave bears.

SW: You describe these paintings as representing the awakening of the modern human soul.

WH: It seems to be evident, because at the same time [they were painted] you still had Neanderthal men roaming this area. And Neanderthal men never created culture: there were no burials; there was apparently no religious belief system. Here



you clearly have hints of first religious belief systems. You have figurative representation of animals, of humans. There is evidence of musical instruments. There is evidence of body adornments. And, of course, technical inventions like the spear thrower, which was invented some 15,000 years before the bow and arrow – extraordinary inventions that Neanderthal man didn't have. So it's quite, quite evident that it is *us*. It is us 32,000 to 35,000 years ago.

Of course we have no idea what the paintings meant to them. We can only take some educated guess by looking into cultures that were in a Stone Age existence until fairly recently, like Australian Aborigines or bushmen in the Kalahari Desert.

SW: I was particularly struck by how multi-dimensional the paintings are.

WH: I like that you saw it in 3D, because I keep saying this film is the only 3D film where I really know it was imperative to do it in 3D. I was and I still am a sceptic of 3D, but the moment I saw the cave it was absolutely clear it had to be done in 3D, no question, no discussion about it.

SW: It must have been difficult using the camera in that confined space.

WH: The steel door was hermetically sealed behind us – they didn't want to open and close the door all the time because the climate inside is so delicate. I was only allowed three people with me, and so on this two-foot-wide walkway we had to reconfigure our camera from scratch. We started out with literally a steel plate with holes and two parallel steel rods for the two eyes, or the two lenses. I had very, very excellent people: cinematographer Peter Zeitlinger and his assistant Erik Söllner, a very, very good craftsman. And we were blessed that we had Kaspar Callas, a man from Estonia, who not only developed some of our software but built our hard-

DEEP FOCUS

Werner Herzog shooting 'Cave of Forgotten Dreams' inside the Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc Cave, where movement is restricted to a narrow metal walkway

ware as well! Just a phenomenal, phenomenal talent. He's also a filmmaker, so what was good [was that] I never talked to a technician – I spoke to a fellow filmmaker.

SW: Have other 3D movies inspired you?

WH: No, not really. There is not much inspiration [to be had] from 3D films, and I can tell you why. Number one, our eyes are not really comfortable with seeing 3D over lengthy periods of time. We see the world with one eye dominant and the other one peripherally seeing the third dimension. Of course, when you're a basketball player in the NBA you have to use full 3D throughout the game to understand the movement of people, the ball and the position of the target. But it's not very comfortable and the brain is very selective, so it somehow dims down our 3D vision in everyday life. So it's fine for when you do real 'fireworks' like some of the 3D films [do], like *Avatar*, yes, it's OK. But 3D is not going to take over everything, like from black-and-white television to colour television. It's not going to happen like that...

I have developed a dictum, but I have to explain it first. When you see a firework, there's nothing beyond the firework effect. There's no depth to it, there's no deeper meaning to it. When you see a romantic comedy, for example, we as an audience live and develop through a parallel story – we hope and pray that our young lovers should, against all obstacles, find each other by the end. In 3D you only have what is in 3D and nothing beyond – it's a very strange effect. And hence, this is my dictum: you can shoot a porno film in 3D, but you cannot film a romantic comedy in 3D.

SW: The format is perfect for bringing out the contours of the cave, but you also seem to be having some fun with the format, notably with the scene in which a spear is thrust towards the camera.

WH: Yes, I'm making some fun of the 3D effect, sure.

SW: The other interesting thing is that you're bringing what is seen to be one of the most cutting-edge forms of cinema to what is the most primitive form of cinema, as you refer to cave painting in the film.

WH: There's something like proto-cinema in some of the paintings, like a running bison with eight legs, somehow hinting at movement, and a rhinoceros in seven or eight phases, like in an animated film, [seen] bit by bit by bit. It's quite astonishing.

SW: How did you find Maurice Maurin, the master perfumer who appears in the film?

WH: I was searching for him. I learned that there are plans to build a replica of the cave for tourists, about three miles away, and I was told that there are even plans to recreate the prehistoric scent of the cave. I got in touch with this perfumer lady who wanted to speak in front of the camera, [but] she was unreliable and not really good on film.

So I was searching for a perfumer and by coincidence, only 20 miles away, there lived this perfumer who used to be the president of the Master Perfumers of France. He was just wonderful and I loved his enthusiasm and his way of talking. But of course I asked him to sniff out cracks in the rock and describe the scent emanating from it.

SW: And how did you discover the albino crocodiles featured at the end of the film? These reptiles seem to link back not only to the iguanas in 'Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans' but all the way back to the lizard specialist in 'Fata Morgana' (1971).

WH: They are wonderful. They happened to be not too far away, on the Rhône river, near a nuclear plant. I didn't even know they were albino croco-

Werner Herzog Cave of Forgotten Dreams



JEAN-LOUIS MINISTRE DE LA CULTURE ET DE LA COMMUNICATION



CAVE MEN
Herzog with cinematographer Peter Zeitlinger, centre, and 'experimental archaeologist' Wulf Hein, right. Left, images from the cave

◀ diles – I went there because I was just curious to see the 300 or more crocodiles. Right next to the entrance there's this separate enclosure and I saw these two albino crocodiles – I could not believe my eyes and I said, "They have to be in the movie."

It's pure science fiction, but of course related to the film. How do we see images that were made 32,000 years ago? How would an albino crocodile see images by human beings? Very, very strange, and for me a very deep question, of course. And, strangely enough, the film speaks about [the fact that] the site is widening and soon these crocodiles will reach Chauvet Cave and penetrate it – only four months ago a handful of crocodiles escaped from this compound. They were all recaptured with the exception of one, which is still at large somewhere in the French countryside. I really love that idea.

SW: At one point you describe the scientists' digital mapping of the cave as akin to drawing up the Manhattan telephone directory. Were you frustrated by the experts' more clinical, pragmatic approach?

WH: No, thank God there is a new generation of scientists who are very diligent in describing the status quo and who are not like the previous generations in immediately declaring this as a cult site. They are much more cautious. I think it's quite good that they are mapping, and then after that they try to understand the stories behind it. They are very cautious in their assessments.

A long time ago I made a film – one of my first films – *The Flying Doctors of East Africa* [1969]. Villagers in Uganda were taught about preventing trachoma and eye disease, and for two years they were teaching using posters. I had the feeling the villagers did not see them the way we saw them, and I asked: "What is this here?" (An eye.) They said, "This is the rising sun," though for two hours

they had been taught about this eye and how to clean it. And I asked, "Can you show me a single eye?" Some people pointed at windows of a hut. I had the feeling I should dig deeper into this, and I hung four posters parallel to each other and, on purpose, I hung one upside down. On camera, I explained to the villagers: "I have four posters here. You have seen these posters all day long, and I have hung one upside down on purpose. If you were suspended by your feet by a rope and your head was dangling down, which one of the four posters would be upside down?" Less than half could identify the poster that was upside down. They probably saw some abstract specks of colour. They must have seen the image in a different way to the way we saw it.

Until today I have had no idea how they were seeing it. I have tried to explore the procedure of human vision: how would we know what these animals in the paintings on the walls meant for humans that were 32,000 years ago? It was a time when Neanderthal men were roaming around, a time when the Alps were covered by 9,000 feet of ice, when you could walk from Paris to London with dry feet because the ice absorbed so much humidity that the English Channel didn't exist. So, how do we understand, beyond such an abyss of time, what was going on in [their minds]?

We also have to speculate that there might have been cannibalism, because in all Palaeolithic and Neolithic cultures you have evidence of it. When for them did the human being start to exist? It's an interesting question, because you find skeleton remains of babies with the garbage, but children who were over three years old were buried. So, human toddlers, who did not speak yet, apparently for them didn't yet have human nature. So there are very deep questions about human beings who

are, in a way, us, and yet separated by an abyss of time. In other words, I'm glad that there is a new generation of archaeologists out there.

SW: I know you usually work very closely with the musicians scoring your films. What sort of instructions did you give Ernst Reijseger for his music?

WH: I showed him materials as quickly as I could – long, long takes of images that I had filmed, uncut. He immediately understood and proposed that there should be a choir and an organ. We recorded in a church and I was always there during the recording. In a way I was also guiding the inner *ductus* of the music. There was one piece that was too *motorik* in its rhythm and I said, "No, this is not going to work, we have to have it slower. It has to flow, it has to float." We have an intense rapport when he's recording music. I love Reijseger. In my opinion, he's of the calibre of a young, emerging Stravinsky. You will not easily find music of that calibre in a film in the next few decades.

SW: Assuming you're not tempted by the idea of making a narrative film in 3D, can I ask what you are working on at the moment?

WH: On Monday I will continue filming on *Death Row*, first in Florida and then in Texas, for a film project, *Death Row*. It will be a one-and-a-half-hour documentary, but I'm also planning to make four separate one-hour films on individual cases. And I'm working on a feature-film project, which is a sort of big epic in the Arabian desert. And I have some five or six other feature films pushing at me, lining up. And I will hold my Rogue Film School, by the way, in London in March. I'm viewing DVDs and applications at the moment. I like what I do.

■ 'Cave of Forgotten Dreams' is released on 25 March, and is reviewed on p.52. Werner Herzog is in conversation on 25 March at Cadogan Hall, London



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For a writer whose books reveal a deep love of cinema through their scattering of film references and allusions – and who has admitted having spent most of his time as a student shut away in cinemas – Haruki Murakami has been surprisingly resistant to permitting screen adaptations of his work. Until he gave the green light to Vietnamese-French director Tran Anh Hung to adapt his breakthrough 1987 bestseller *Norwegian Wood* (*Noruegi no mori*), there had been only a handful of shorts and two features: Jun Ichikawa's ingenious adaptation of the 1995 short story *Tony Takitani*, and Kazuki Omori's little-seen 1980 adaptation of Murakami's first novel, *Hear the Wind Sing*; the author was reportedly so displeased with the latter that he hardened his resolve against further adaptations.

But perhaps the real reason for Murakami's reluctance was that he understands better than anyone how difficult his literary voice is to translate to the screen – even in the case of a more sentimental, realist example of his work, such as *Norwegian Wood*.

"Murakami's a very secretive man, and he's never said exactly why he allowed me to adapt it," Tran tells me, speaking from Paris, where he has lived since leaving Vietnam as a child. It was only after several years of negotiations with Tran and the film's Japanese producer Ogawa Shinji that the author agreed. "He knew my films before meeting me," Tran adds, "so I hope that he saw something in them that he thought would fit his book. He's a

very practical person. Before giving me the green light he wanted to see the script, and also he wanted to know the budget."

Rumours of an adaptation of *Norwegian Wood* have circulated ever since it was first published in Japan in 1987 – if only because the book's massive success (it has now sold over 10 million copies worldwide) would provide a ready-made expectant audience. Murakami rejected many hopeful producers over the years; although the narrative is straightforward in comparison to, say, his meta-physical epic *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*, *Norwegian Wood* had been deemed unfilmable by some, as so much of its richness lies in the interior monologues of its central character Watanabe. A brief summary of the story can hardly convey the book's irresistible charm, or the way it captures the giddy, exuberant rush of new experiences – both happy and sad – that characterise late adolescence.

Beginning in the late 1960s, the story follows student Watanabe (played in the film by Japanese pin-up Matsuyama Ken'ichi) as he moves to Tokyo to start university, leaving behind Naoko (Kikuchi Rinko, Oscar-nominated in 2007 for her role in *Babel*), the girlfriend of a friend who has recently committed suicide. Two years later, after a chance encounter, Watanabe visits Naoko and sleeps with her, but the romance is halted when she is sent to a sanatorium in the countryside, and refuses to see him. After a string of casual encounters, he starts a romance with an angelically pretty, emotionally uncomplicated student named Midori (former teen model Mizuhara Kiko), but the relationship

founders as he finds himself unable to forget Naoko. When he finally visits Naoko again at the sanatorium (where she is looked after by Reiko, a nurse whose strumming of the Beatles tune lingers in Watanabe's memory) their encounter prompts intense soul-searching and confessions – and, ultimately, tragedy.

In outline, it might sound overwrought – and indeed *The Guardian's* Peter Bradshaw has described Tran's film jokingly as "emo... a *Twilight* for the arthouse set". In the novel, the melancholy aspects of the story are balanced by Murakami's distinctive, imaginative tone, the sparking of the dialogue and the sense of intimacy created by Watanabe's interior monologue – something Tran worked hard to capture in his own way.

"The challenge came in trying to put Watanabe's inner life on screen," Tran explains. "How to create a cinematic language so that people could feel his interior thoughts, without them being said. It was very difficult to do. They need to echo everywhere in the film, in the images, in the landscapes.

"To give you an example," he continues. "Towards the end of the film there is the love-making scene between Watanabe and Reiko. It comes at a point where Watanabe feels guilty about Naoko, so Reiko gives him the chance to save another woman – her – by giving her back her sexuality, so she can start a new life. By saving her, he's able to ease his guilt. I wondered how I could show visually this feeling Watanabe has of making amends with life. So immediately after, we then



OLD FLAMES
Watanabe, left and opposite, finds himself drawn to the disturbed Naoko, top, in preference to the uncomplicated Midori, below



see Watanabe standing high up in a tree, Naoko leaning against the tree below, and Reiko squatting next to the water, before walking past, smiling. The scene has nothing to do with the telling of the story, but when you see it, you immediately have the feeling that the characters are making up with life. It's the kind of thing you can't write down in a script. You can only shoot it because you feel at a certain point that it's important. I wasn't sure what it was for when I shot it—I wasn't even sure where I would put it in the film. It was only late in the editing that I remembered it. It works in a very precise way—it's about the very specific language of cinema. You cannot create that kind of emotion in another form of art."

A very unstable feeling

Whether the film succeeds in capturing Murakami's distinctive narrative voice is arguable, but a similar preference for the visual over the literary and purely verbal has marked each of Tran's films since his debut *The Scent of Green Papaya* (*Mùi du đu xanh*) in 1992. That film's gentle, immersive recreation of 1950s Vietnam was followed by a stylish, deliriously violent story of a rickshaw driver unwittingly drawn into the Ho Chi Minh City underworld: *Cyclo* (*Xích lô*, 1995), which won Tran the Golden Lion at Venice. He returned to Vietnam to make the sensuous *At the Height of Summer* (*Mùa hè chiều thẳng đứng*) in 2000, after the collapse of an earlier attempt at filming *I Come with the Rain*, a country-hopping, baroquely violent story about a modern-day Christ-like ➡

*Famously protective of his novels, Haruki Murakami has entrusted his 1987 bestseller 'Norwegian Wood' to French-Vietnamese director Tran Anh Hung, who tells **James Bell** about capturing the author's distinctive narrative voice*

SENSUAL SENSIBILITY



CULTURE CROSS
Based in France,
Tran Anh Hung has
worked frequently
in his native Vietnam,
and now in Japan



'The challenge was in trying to create a cinematic language so that people could feel his interior thoughts'

figure. Tran managed to make that film in 2008, with an international cast including Josh Hartnett, Elias Koteas, Shawn Yue, Takuya Kimura and Korean star Lee Byung-hun. (It finally gets a UK release this month.)

Tran rejects the suggestion that he has deliberately alternated between softer, 'feminine' stories and violent, 'masculine' films. "If only I could choose!" he says. "I always have several projects I'll be working on, but then for some reason one will collapse and I find I have the financing to do another... It's really by chance." That said, *Norwegian Wood* is clearly in line with the lush visuals of *At the Height of Summer*; it also sees Tran collaborating once again with that film's cinematographer, Mark Lee Ping Bin, who has also worked with Hou Hsiao-Hsien, Tian Zhuangzhuang and – memorably – Wong Kar-Wai on *In the Mood for Love*. "What's incredible about Mark's work is the very sensual way he has of moving the camera," Tran says. "It gives the film a very unstable feeling – it's a little like the camera is floating around the characters. I never knew how he was going to move the camera – it would change for each take. It gave the film something really fresh."

The word "sensual" comes up again and again. *Norwegian Wood* is indeed stunningly, seductively beautiful, its colour palette veering between deep blues for night-time interior scenes, honeyed yellows for scenes with Midori, and bleak snowy-winter whites as the story nears tragedy – all captured on HD cameras.

"Mark didn't like working on HD – this was the first time he had used it," Tran admits. "But I liked it because it's better for capturing skin tones – it gives the skin the sensuality I was looking for. I wanted the audience to have the desire to touch the actors' skin, to bite their lips. I think he was resistant to using HD because he's so good with film. But there were certain scenes for which it was essential for the feel I was after. In the love-making scenes, for example, if we'd used film we would have had to use more light, which would have changed the texture of the scene. With a lack of light, the reflection of the colour of the walls

would provide the skin tones – it brings a very soft, intimate, romantic feeling to those scenes."

The mobility of HD cameras also freed up the shooting of some of the external sequences, most strikingly in a dramatic scene after Watanabe visits Naoko in the sanatorium. In muted dawn light, the pair march back and forth through long green grass, as Naoko suddenly and unexpectedly reveals the reason why she disappeared soon after she and Watanabe slept with each other. As they walk, the camera keeps pace with them in an unbroken take.

"The nature of that scene is confessional," Tran explains. "Watanabe finally learns about Naoko's problems, so it's a very important scene. What she has to say is very tough, very violent – but at the same time it's all about sex. I wanted the landscape to be very wide, but also to have round shapes to bring out a feeling of sensuality. Once we'd found the landscape, I had the idea to make them walk very quickly, because only by seeing her walking so fast can we feel her anger about her problem. I asked the actor not to 'play' the anger, only to walk very fast. Because she's talking at the same time as walking so fast, her words come with an effort, so hopefully the audience will feel physically the tension in the scene."

Beauty and darkness

Tran wrote the first draft of the script for *Norwegian Wood* in French, then had it translated into English for his dealings with Murakami – before it was finally translated into Japanese for the cast. "Murakami sent me a lot of notes," Tran recalls. "He wrote the book a long time ago now, so he feels some distance from it. He made several really important suggestions: for example in Naoko's birthday scene, she says that she would prefer to go from 18 to 19 and then back to 18 again. That dialogue was not in the book – he gave it to me for the film. It works very well, because it's an awkward line for the actress to say, and it gives a hint that something is wrong with the character."

Tran doesn't speak Japanese himself, so how did he judge the actors' delivery of their lines? "You have to make the language fit the film," he says. "I

wanted the dialogue to have a musicality to it, so I asked the actors to draw their lines out – to speak more slowly than they would normally. It's something I also did in the films I made in Vietnam. It was more important for me that the actors find the right delivery for the language of cinema than that they follow Murakami. But of course the actors had read the book, and they told me they wanted to keep as much of Murakami's language as possible."

That sense of possessiveness the actors felt towards Murakami's words is indicative of the way the book is cherished, and not just in Japan. It's always an issue for any director adapting a popular novel – much of the audience will come to the film with fully formed mental pictures of the characters. Did that affect the casting of *Norwegian Wood*? "During casting I looked on blogs and forums, and people had speculated or come up with their own ideal cast lists," Tran admits. "I saw lots and lots of people. The most important thing for me was to see the humanity in them – and if it fitted the humanity of the characters. Then I had to trust that the actors would be good enough."

Underpinning the film's mood of introspective melancholy is Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood's score, which comprises swelling, often discordant pieces written for strings and a delicate plucked-guitar theme that recurs throughout the film. Tran is something of a Radiohead fan, having used songs by the band in both *Cyclo* and *I Come with the Rain*, but *Norwegian Wood* marks the first time he and Greenwood have collaborated directly on original material. It was Greenwood's score for *There Will Be Blood* that convinced the director that his music would work with *Norwegian Wood*.

"I thought he would be perfect for this story, which is about love and loss, because his music has a balance of beauty and darkness about it," Tran explains. "The characters go through deep pain and profound dilemmas. I wanted the music to have the depth to express that." Greenwood would send him short pieces, which Tran would try out over different scenes. "I told him that I didn't want to use music to create emotion," Tran continues. "The emotions needed to already be there, and the music would just confirm it. That's why his music often only comes in towards the end of a scene."

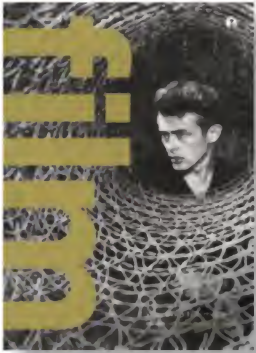
As well as the original score, the film uses a number of songs by Krautrock legends Can – again at Greenwood's suggestion. "I planned to use five or six songs by The Doors," Tran says. "I felt that they had the sensuality and the level of emotion that would fit the story. But when Johnny got involved he advised me to use Can, and he was right. Because they're less well known by most, it gives the film a different authenticity, and the sound fits the period of the late 60s so well."

Tran has made his last two films outside Vietnam. Where is he planning to work next? "If you'd asked me this question three months ago, I would have told you I was about to start making a film in Ireland," he says. "But that fell through. I have three projects I'm working on now, and it will be a French film. But perhaps we shouldn't talk about it. It could take another five years!"

■ '*Norwegian Wood*' is released on 11 March, and is reviewed on page 70; '*I Come with the Rain*' is released in selected cinemas on 25 March

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The Cinema of Mika Kaurismäki
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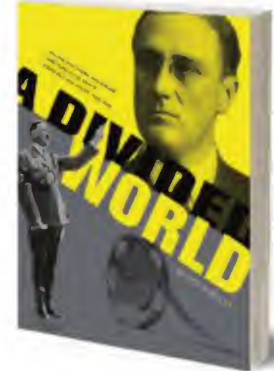
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A Divided World
Hollywood Cinema and Émigré
Directors in the Era of Roosevelt
and Hitler, 1933-1948

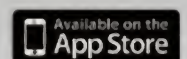
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Grant Gee's film *'Patience (After Sebald)'* and a recent symposium inspire **Mark Fisher** to revisit *'The Rings of Saturn'*, the Suffolk odyssey of German-born writer W.G. Sebald

UNDER THE SIGN OF SATURN

The first time I saw Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker* – when it was broadcast by Channel 4 in the early 1980s – I was reminded of the Suffolk landscapes where I had holidayed as a child. The overgrown pillboxes, the squat Martello towers, the rusting groynes that resembled gravestones: they all added up to a ready-made science-fiction scene. At one point in Grant Gee's *Patience (After Sebald)* – an essay film inspired by author W.G. Sebald's 1995 book *The Rings of Saturn* – theatre director Katie Mitchell makes the same connection, drawing a comparison between the demilitarised expanses of the Suffolk coast and Tarkovsky's "Zone".

When I read *The Rings of Saturn*, I was hoping that it would be an exploration of these eerily numinous spaces. Yet what I found was something rather different: a book that, it seemed to me at least, morosely trudged through the Suffolk spaces without really looking at them. Instead it offered a *Mittelbrow* miserabilism, a stock disdain, in which the human settlements are routinely dismissed as shabby and the inhuman spaces are oppressive. The landscape in *The Rings of Saturn* functions as a thin conceit; the places Sebald visits operate as triggers for a literary ramble that reads less like a travelogue than a librarian's listless daydream. Rather than engage with previous literary encounters – with the Suffolk where Henry James went on a walking tour, or where his namesake M.R. James set two of his most atmospheric ghost stories – Sebald tends to reach for the likes of Borges.

My scepticism was nourished by the solemn cult that settled suspiciously quickly around Sebald and his books (*Vertigo*, *The Emigrants* and *Austerlitz* are the other main titles) – all the more so after his premature death in 2001. With his well-wrought sentences, Sebald offered a rather easy sort of difficulty – an anachronistic, antiqued model of 'good literature' that acted as if many of the developments in 20th-century experimental fiction and popular culture had never happened.

It's not hard to see why a German writer would want to blank out the middle part of the 20th century; and many of the formal anachronisms of Sebald's writing – its strange sense that this is the modern world seen through the restrained yet ornate prose of an early 20th-century essayist – perhaps arise from this desire, just as his books themselves are about the various, ultimately failed ruses, conscious and unconscious, that damaged psyches deploy to erase traumas and construct new identities.

The writer Robert Macfarlane has called Sebald a "post-modern antiquarian", and the indetermi-

nate status of *The Rings of Saturn* – is it autobiography, a novel or a travelogue? – points to a certain playfulness; but this never emerges at the level of the book's content. It was necessary for Sebald to remain po-faced in order for the 'antiquing' to be successful. Some of Gee's images of Suffolk take their cue from the black-and-white photographs that illustrate *The Rings of Saturn*. But the photographs were a contrivance: they were snapshots that Sebald would photocopy many times until they achieved the required graininess.

Gee's film premiered at Snape Maltings, near Aldeburgh in Suffolk, as part of a weekend of events superbly curated by Gareth Evans of Artevents under the rubric *After Sebald: Place and Re-enchantment*. But Sebald's books fit only awkwardly into a discussion of place and enchantment – his work is more about displacement and disenchantment. In *Patience (After Sebald)*, the artist Tacita Dean observes that only children have a real sense of home; adults are always aware of the transitoriness of their dwelling-place – none more so than Sebald, a German writer who spent most of his life in Norfolk.

Patience (After Sebald) follows Gee's previous documentaries about Radiohead and Joy Division. The shift from rock to literature, Gee told Macfarlane, was one that came naturally to someone whose sensibilities were formed by the UK music culture of the 1970s, in which song titles were portals that could lead you to Conrad, Kafka or Ballard, and the music press – which for many of us then constituted a supplementary education system – would routinely reference Derrida and Baudrillard. If Sebald had been writing in the 1970s, Gee claimed, he would surely have been mentioned in the *NME* alongside other luminaries of avant-garde literature.

The film's somewhat gnomic title suggests the slowing of time that the Suffolk landscape imposes – a release from urban urgencies. But it actually

turns out to be a reference to a passage in Sebald's 2001 novel *Austerlitz*:

Austerlitz told me that he sometimes sat here for hours, laying out these photographs or others from his collection the wrong way up, as if playing a game of patience, and that then one by one, he turned them over, always with a new sense of surprise at what he saw, pushing the pictures back and forth and over each other, arranging them in an order depending on their family resemblances, or withdrawing them from the game until either there was nothing left but the grey tabletop, or he felt exhausted from the constant effort of thinking and remembering and had to rest on the ottoman.

Gee originally intended to make a film about the non-places in Sebald's work: the hotel rooms or railway-station waiting-rooms in which characters ruminate, converse or break down. (Austerlitz himself comes to a shattering revelation about his own identity in the waiting-room at Liverpool Street station.) In the end, however, he was drawn to *The Rings of Saturn*, which – ostensibly at least – is most focused on a single landscape. He filmed practically everything himself, using a converted 16mm Bolex camera; he wanted something that would produce frames that were "tighter than normal", he said, "as if a single character is looking". Gee sees *Patience (After Sebald)* as an essay film in the tradition of Chris Petit's work and Patrick Keiller's *Robinson* trilogy. But when I put it to him that *Patience* lacks the single voice that defines Petit or Keiller's essay films, Gee responded self-deprecatingly. He had tried to insert himself into his own films, but he had always been dissatisfied with the results: his voice didn't sound right; his acting didn't convince; his writing wasn't strong enough. In *Patience*, as in *Joy Division* (2008), the story is therefore told by others: Macfarlane, Dean, Petit, Iain Sinclair, the literary critic Marina Warner and the artist Jeremy Millar, who provides one of the film's most uncanny images. When he lit a firework in tribute to Sebald, the smoke unexpectedly formed a shape that resembled Sebald's face – something Gee underlines in the film by animating a transition between Millar's photograph and an image of the novelist.

More than one of the speakers at the 'Towards Re-enchantment' symposium acknowledged that they misremembered *The Rings of Saturn*. There's something fitting about this, of course, given that the duplicity of memory might have been Sebald's major theme. But my suspicion is that misremembering of a different kind contributes to the *Rings of Saturn* cult. The book induces its readers to hallucinate a text that is not there, but which meets



GETTY IMAGES (2)



their desires – for a kind of modernist travelogue, a novel that would do justice to the Suffolk landscape – better than Sebald's book actually does.

Patience (After Sebald) is itself a misremembering of *The Rings of Saturn* that can't help but reverse the book's priorities. In the book, Suffolk frequently recedes from attention, as Sebald follows his own lines of association. By contrast, the main substance of the film consists of images of the Suffolk landscape: the heathland over which you can walk for miles without seeing a soul; the crumbling cliffs of the lost city of Dunwich; the enigma of Orford Ness, its inscrutable pagodas silently presiding over Cold War military experiments that remain secret. Sebald's reflections, voiced in *Patience* by Jonathan Pryce, anchor these images far less securely than they do in the book.

At the Snape event, some of those who had recreated Sebald's walk (including Gee himself) confessed that they had failed to attain the author's lugubrious mood; the landscape turned out to be too energising, its sublime desolation proving to be fallow ground for gloomy psychological interiority. In a conversation with Robert Macfarlane after the screening of the film, Gee said that it was not really necessary for Sebald to have taken the

In 'Patience (After Sebald)', Katie Mitchell compares the expanses of the Suffolk coast to Tarkovsky's 'Zone'

walk. He meant that it was not important whether or not Sebald actually did the walk exactly as *The Rings of Saturn*'s narrator describes it, in one go – that the book could have been based on a number of different walks over a longer period of time. But I couldn't help but hear Gee's remark in a different way: that it was not necessary for Sebald to have taken the walk at all – that, far from being a close engagement with the Suffolk terrain, *The Rings of Saturn* could have been written if Sebald had never set foot in Suffolk.

This was the view of Richard Mabey, cast in the role of the symposium's doubting Thomas. Mabey (who has written about nature for 40 years, and whose latest book *Weeds* has the glorious subtitle *How Vagabond Plants Gatecrashed Civilization and Changed the Way We Think About Nature*) argued

that Sebald was guilty of the pathetic fallacy. When he read *The Rings of Saturn*, Mabey said, he felt as if a very close friend had been belittled; although he had walked the Suffolk coast countless times, he couldn't recognise it from Sebald's descriptions. But perhaps the issue with Sebald is that he wasn't guilty enough of the pathetic fallacy. Instead of staining the landscape with his passions – as Thomas Hardy did with Wessex or the Brontës with Yorkshire or, more recently, as the musician Richard Skelton has done with the Lancashire moorland – Sebald used Suffolk as a kind of Rorschach blot, a trigger for associative processes that take flight from the landscape rather than take root in it. In any case, Mabey wanted a confrontation with nature in all its inhuman exteriority. He sounded like a Deleuzian philosopher when he talked of the "nested heterogeneity" and "autonomous poetry" of micro-ecosystems to be found in a cow's hoof print.

I was struck by the parallels between Mabey's account of nature and Patrick Keiller's invocation of lichen as "a non-human intelligence" in last year's *Robinson in Ruins*. With its examination of the "undiscovered country of nearby", Robert Macfarlane's 2010 BBC film *The Wild Places of Essex* (shown as part of the symposium) was also close to Mabey's vision of a nature thriving in the spaces abandoned by humans. (Macfarlane's film is a counterpart to Julien Temple's wonderful *Oil City Confidential*, which roots Dr Feelgood's febrile R&B in the lunar landscape of Essex's Canvey Island.)

Patience (After Sebald) could appeal to a Sebald sceptic like me because – in spite of Sebald – it reaches the wilds of Suffolk. At the same time, Gee's quietly powerful film caused me to doubt my own scepticism, sending me back to Sebald's books in search of what others had found in them.

■ *'Patience (After Sebald)'* will screen at festivals later in the year



IN THE ZONE
Shot on 16mm, the images of 'Patience (After Sebald)' evoke the photographs taken by W.G. Sebald, opposite, for his book 'The Rings of Saturn'

JERZY SKOLIMOWSKI THE FUGITIVE

*After 30 years of making films in exile in the West, director Jerzy Skolimowski is back working in his native Poland – aptly enough, on the story of a man on the run in a foreign land. He talks to **David Thompson** about ‘Essential Killing’*



OUT IN THE COLD
In ‘Essential Killing’, the new film by Jerzy Skolimowski, opposite, Vincent Gallo, right, plays a Muslim prisoner on the run through snowy wastes after rendition to Poland

Appropriately coming from a filmmaker who has endured his own share of troubles, *Essential Killing* deals with survival against the odds. Premiered last year to acclaim at the Venice Film Festival, Jerzy Skolimowski’s challengingly visceral film shows a man caught on the run in his sun-beaten, desert home and transported far away to a freezing, snow-clad forest, where he escapes his captors and then has to fend for himself against other humans and animal life. But there is more detail to be glimpsed than that. The opening landscapes could be Afghanistan, the men in uniform speak English in American accents, the workers in the forest are speaking Polish, and our mute central figure – incarnated by a raggedly hirsute Vincent Gallo – experiences flashbacks to an Islamic world, accompanied by readings from the Koran.

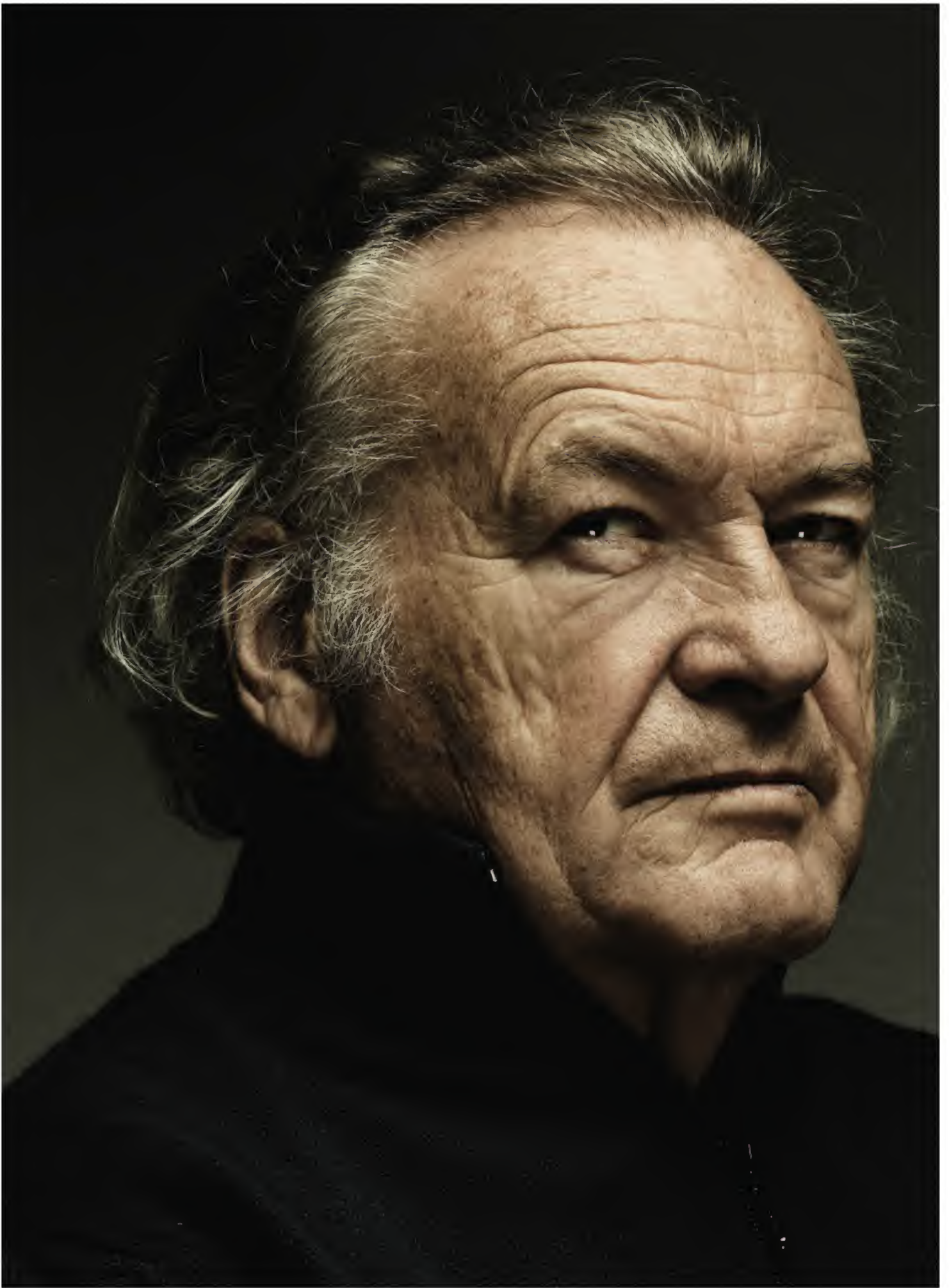
Is the Polish-born, now once again Polish-resident Skolimowski having his *mazurek* and eating it? The fact that his film aims not to make any political statement has aroused suspicion, but he remains resolute about his ambiguous, poetic approach. When I encountered the relaxed, good-humoured director at last year’s London Film Festival, he was well prepared with his defence.

“I live in a really remote area of wild forest in Masuria,” he says. “Of course I was aware that in my neighbourhood there is a secret military airport where CIA planes most likely landed. It was a widespread rumour that is now practically confirmed. The Lithuanian government admitted that they had such bases, so it was the turn of the Poles. One winter night I was driving back home, and though my car is pretty solid – a four-wheel drive – I skidded off the road. I nearly rolled over down the slope, but stopped at the last moment. And I realised that I was close to that secret airport – that I was on the same road on which they most likely transported those prisoners in a kind of convoy. So I thought if that could happen to me, it could happen to anyone.”

Skolimowski’s original conceit of filming entirely in Poland was expanded to include Israel for the desert scenes and also Norway to guarantee the snow, but that didn’t change his viewpoint. “To me the story is not who he is, or whether he is guilty or innocent, but the fact this man is barefoot, in chains, in the snow in the forest. This is the story – the process of him turning into an animal.”

The casting of Vincent Gallo in the central role came out of an encounter at the Cannes Film Festival, where the director gave the actor the script. Two hours later Gallo said yes, claiming that wintry conditions didn’t scare off a man brought up in Buffalo. Skolimowski now laughs at the idea: “Buffalo can’t have been that severe! In Norway, sometimes it was minus 35 Celsius. With night shooting that really was difficult. We tried to take as much care as possible, but he wasn’t easy. Vincent is a Method actor, and playing such a part – one man against everybody else – he kind of accumulated that in his private life as well. There were some conflicts, delicately speaking. But I can’t blame him – the circumstances were very, very tough. The character he played required this attitude. What really counts is the final result, and on the screen he’s just phenomenal.”

Hunger drives this man – named as Mohammed in the end credits – to gnaw at raw fish and devour ➤



NICOLAS GUERIN/OUTLINE BY CORBIS (2)

◀ a hill of ants. “[Gallo] complained there were so very few ants!” Skolimowski recalls. “We had 300 of them, but it was winter, when they are naturally asleep. We prepared them in tubes, but getting them out was so difficult. He imagined that he would have a handful of ants to eat, which would have been spectacular but not very realistic. So that was one of the clashes. He kept asking, ‘Why are there so few ants?’ And he did eat the live fish, while its tail was flapping!”

Return to zero

As for Skolimowski's reasons for avoiding political subjects, we need to flash back 50 years. In the 1960s, he was one of the leading lights of the international ‘new wave’ of directors who travelled the festival circuit, picking up prizes and achieving distribution outside their homeland. But by his own account, his life has been a continuing series of accidents and sudden decisions. His early passion for jazz (and in particular Krzysztof Komeda, the brilliant but short-lived pianist who composed the scores for Skolimowski's and Polanski's early films) led him into writing poetry; this attracted the attention of the esteemed Polish director Andrzej Wajda, who asked the young poet to work on the script of his 1960 ‘youth’ film, *Immanent Sorcerers* (*Niewinni czarodzieje*). It was Wajda who pushed Skolimowski towards the Lodz film school, where he combined his short-film exercises into one feature, *Rysopis* (*Identification Marks—None*, 1964), thus cheating the system to become a fully fledged director in his twenties.

Skolimowski's next two films – *Walkover* (1965) and *Bariera* (*Barrier*, 1966) – were semi-autobiographical dramas depicting Polish youth coming to terms with Communist restrictions and the hypocrisies of an older generation. They stood out for the energy of their director's invention and sly humour – and especially the bravura of his visual style. On *Walkover*, he remembers, he “was obsessed with long tracking shots, so the film has only 29 camera set-ups, a couple 11 minutes long”.

Next came the first offer to work abroad, making *Le Départ* (1966) in Belgium with the actors from Godard's *Masculin Féminin*, Jean-Pierre Léaud and Catherine Duport. “I didn't speak any French,” Skolimowski recalls. “It was all done through an interpreter. I was showing Jean-Pierre Léaud exactly what to do, and he just repeated what I showed him, including jumping into a car through

the window. He said, ‘If you do it, I'll do it,’ so I jumped.” The resulting film (mysteriously difficult to track down now) is both deliciously funny and morally abrasive, with a then-shocking scene of implied fellatio and a memorable final image of the film burning up in the projector.

Skolimowski was still not 30, and his star appeared to be in the ascendant – until the Polish authorities saw his next film, *Rece do góry* (*Hands Up*), which provocatively featured the elevation of a billboard in which the face of Stalin is accidentally sporting an extra set of eyes. “The film was anti-Stalinist,” Skolimowski explains. “Officially we were over that period, but I wanted to prove that Stalinism was still in the mentality of people. And that image of Stalin with four eyes, it was too much for the authorities. They banned the film. I fought for it – I tried to convince the top people in the Communist regime that it might be good for the country if we showed a certain independent spirit. But they were not ready for it and they said I couldn't make films like this in Poland. I said I wasn't interested in making any other kind of films – that I wasn't going to make popular comedies. So they pushed me out of the country. I had to emigrate. I had to start from zero.”

With help from his friend and fellow exile Roman Polanski, Skolimowski received the offer to direct *The Adventures of Gerard* (1970), an adaptation of the Napoleonic adventure stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, which he confesses he never read. (“My worst movie,” he now admits.) Following post-production in London, he decided to stay on and learn English, going on to make one of his finest films, *Deep End* (1970). Charting the obsessive desire of an adolescent boy for the shrewish young woman (played by a young Jane Asher) with whom he works at a seedy public baths in London, the film has been hard to see for years, but will return to distribution later this year (courtesy of the BFI).

The director's career went on to more highs and lows, but a self-acknowledged pattern emerged in that his self-generated ideas almost invariably turned out better than his attempts at literary adaptation. His versions of Nabokov (*King, Queen, Knave*, 1972), Siegfried Lenz (*The Lightship*, 1985) and Turgenev (*Torrents of Spring*, 1989) are confused in execution and not always ideally cast. Only *The Shout* (1978), from a Robert Graves story, holds up in this company.

Skolimowski's one overt concession to a political scenario came with *Moonlighting* (1982), in which Jeremy Irons plays a Polish contractor in London who contrives to hide the news of martial law back home from his fellow workers, to make sure they complete their job renovating a house. The film was made at lightning speed: “Martial law in Poland was declared on 12th December 1981. On 2nd January I began shooting the film! The script was conceived in four days.” Skolimowski raised half the budget from the burgeoning Channel 4, the other half from impresario Michael White in the course of a game of tennis. The impetus came from the director's discovery of a group of stranded Poles for whom he managed to find temporary accommodation, taking one man as a lodger in his own Kensington house.

“Whenever there was the news on the television, he would run downstairs to look at the pictures, as he didn't understand English,” Skolimowski recalls. “He was crying as they showed tanks on the streets. So after a few days I stopped translating what they were saying, but gave him a softer version. When seven miners were killed, I said there was some shooting at the mines, maybe somebody was injured. That moment I realised I was playing a specific character now, and this was the subject for a film. Instead of being so upset and passive like I was at that time, I could make a movie about it. It triggered me exactly the same way as when my car skidded in the case of *Essential Killing*.”

Shot in 18 days, *Moonlighting* was lauded both for its timeliness and for its wry stance. Skolimowski tried to repeat the formula with *Success Is the Best Revenge* (1984), in which Michael York plays a disenfranchised Polish stage director (also based in the filmmaker's Kensington home) attempting an ambitious benefit show for his oppressed countrymen. But during the shoot, the German coproducer went bankrupt, and the British bank Skolimowski turned to for help made impossible terms. “After a few days in which their conditions became more and more tough, I signed whatever they wanted,” he says. “They grabbed the film, and to write off the losses, for them it was better not to release it... And so I lost my house, everything.”

Time of the gypsy

Skolimowski's subsequent “gypsy existence” took him to Rome and then Los Angeles, with the promise of a big-budget film. “It was a story set in turn-of-the-century Vienna, with sexual murders in railway stations,” he remembers. “A terrible book, but the financial offer was such that I couldn't refuse a seven-figure salary – for the first time in my life, the only time I suppose! I thought, OK, turn-of-the-century Vienna, I can put Freud into it, somehow I will elevate the whole thing into a metaphor. So I signed to write and direct the film. But all the time it bothered me that it was based on such a piece of shit. So suddenly I thought, No, I'm not going to make it.”

A disappointed agent proposed he return to his roots and film an adaptation of a great Polish writer, Witold Gombrowicz. But the little-seen *Ferdynand* (aka *Thirty Door Key*, 1991) was killed at birth by being shot in English. “I made a typical Euro-pudding,” Skolimowski now admits.

“They said I couldn’t make films like ‘Hands Up’ in Poland. I had to emigrate. I had to start from zero”



HOME AND AWAY
After ‘Hands Up’, top, aroused the wrath of the Polish authorities, Skolimowski headed to England to make ‘Deep End’, left, and ‘Moonlighting’, right

“Gombrowicz is untranslatable, that’s the problem. I was so unhappy I thought, OK, stop it! I have to pull out, refresh myself as an artist. And that was behind my stopping for so many years. But happily I had the time to revert to my real passion, which was painting, which I’ve done all my life but never had the time for. Suddenly I went through the process of becoming a real painter.”

Skolimowski’s 17-year period as a painter resulted in some success – critical recognition, worldwide exhibitions and serious sales. (During these years he also worked intermittently as an actor, notably as Naomi Watts’s Russian uncle in David Cronenberg’s *Eastern Promises*.) Once again, however, it was a series of chance events that drew him back into filmmaking. A conversation with Isabelle Huppert at a party led to the idea of making a film adaptation of Susan Sontag’s novel *In America*, but only on condition the director proved himself again first with a smaller film.

Working quickly to meet a deadline to pay for their new home in Poland, Skolimowski and his wife Ewa Piaskowska came up with a script based on a one-line story in a newspaper, about a man who was so shy he could only climb into the bedroom window of the woman he loved at night to observe her. Shot entirely in the vicinity of Skolimowski’s house (“I prefer to sleep in my own bed rather than any hotel, even the most luxurious ones”), *Cztery noce z Anna* (*Four Nights with Anna*) was warmly received internationally in 2008, though it has yet to be released in the UK. But Skolimowski the film director was born again – and on his own terms.

Perhaps those years spent away from the camera have made their own contribution to his craft, for *Essential Killing* is arguably the most painterly yet of Skolimowski’s films, a series of tableaux depicting nature in both its beauty and cruelty. The director’s own canvases cross over from the figurative to the abstract and back again, as does the content of the film. But standing ovations and major prizes at Venice notwithstanding, Skolimowski has no immediate desire to make another movie. “As always, I don’t have a project for the future. Zero,” he tells me. “I’ll be going back to painting, and I’ll wait. Maybe something will strike my mind and I’ll get another idea. We’ll see.”

■ ‘*Essential Killing*’ is released in the UK on 1 April, and is reviewed on page 60

BY STILLAS POSTERS AND DESIGNS (2)

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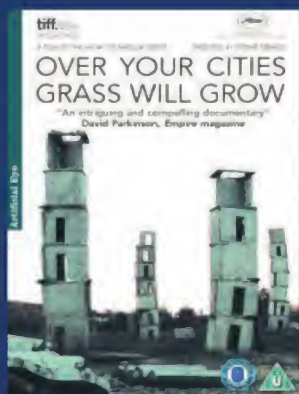
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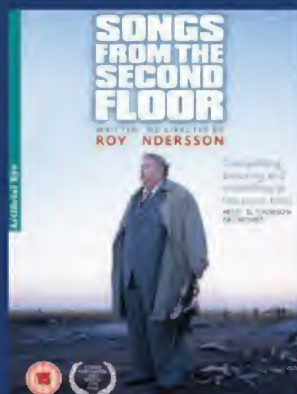
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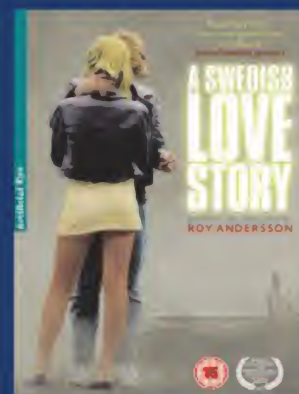
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EMPIRE STATE

The long-lost British gangster classic from cult director Ron Peck (*Nighthawks*, *Fighters*), *Empire State* is a perfect mix of gangster action and the neon camp of the eighties East End club scene. Disparate lives of mobsters, city businessmen, petty thieves and lonely hearts intersect at the Empire State nightclub in London's newly-developed Docklands, on an evening that will end in an orgy of violence.

This gritty, stylish, urban 1980s drama spawned numerous complaints and a lively *Right to Reply* on Channel 4 in 1989, and stars Ray McNally, Cathryn Harrison and Martin Landau, as well as an early role for Jamie Foreman (*Layer Cake*).

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Lance Hammer's **Ballast** confidently declares his faith in a regionalist independent cinema seeking its own path rather than following the 'indie' trends of audience-friendly quirky comedy **p48**
.....

Growing pains

Unlike so many other British TV comedians who have made the transition to film directing, Richard Ayoade reveals a distinctive cinematic talent with his debut, the skewed teen romance 'Submarine'. By Isabel Stevens

Submarine

Richard Ayoade, 2010

Too precocious. Not believable. That was *The New Yorker's* assessment of Holden Caulfield 60 years ago when they rejected *The Catcher in the Rye* in story form. We know now that they overlooked two things: that the mundane details of pubescence often benefit from enhancement, and that self-involved teens in possession of a skewed but perceptive outlook and a singular vocabulary have a knack of talking their way into our hearts.

With Richard Ayoade's *Submarine*, 15-year-old dictionary reader Oliver Tate becomes the first British adolescent to join the likes of Max Fischer, Harold Chasen, Ferris Bueller, Tracy Flick and Juno MacGuff in cinema's register of larger-than-life, idiosyncratic teens – coming as he does from Swansea rather than Hollywood. But in some ways Oliver is a familiar subject for a coming-of-age tale: a briefcase-and-duffel-coat-sporting geek who realises his dreams of getting a girlfriend and losing his virginity – one of those awkward but erudite-behind-the-scenes types who would run a mile from the drug and alcohol-fuelled kids in *Skins* (and whom you suspect Caulfield would call a phony for the close attention he pays to the playground hierarchy).

Through Oliver, Ayoade channels a lot of the characteristics he himself displayed as Moss, the computer nerd he plays so delectably in Channel 4's *The IT Crowd*. But like his kindred spirit Max Fischer (from Wes Anderson's *Rushmore*, 1998), Oliver isn't a wallflower but a first-class schemer with ambitions to single-handedly save his parents' marriage, rescuing his mum Jill (Sally Hawkins) from the clutches of her ex-flame, spiritual guru Graham Purvis (Paddy Considine), and his dad, marine biologist Lloyd (Noah Taylor), from depression. He's also trying to get his relationship with Jordana (Yasmin Paige) back on track after her mother develops an untimely brain tumour that keeps getting in the way of their love life.



Paddy Considine has a lot of fun with the caricature, but it's noticeable that Ayoade's adults aren't quite as well developed as his teenagers

As you might have guessed, *Submarine* – like *Rushmore* – is very funny largely because of its protagonist's staggering capacity for self-delusion.

Like the eccentric, hyperactive teenage mind into which *Submarine* torpedoes us, Ayoade's film – his feature debut – barely rests, darting between Oliver's everyday routine and his memories, fantasies, fears, oddball observations and quasi-philosophical musings. There may be limits to how much precocity an audience will tolerate, but Ayoade's highly subjective approach makes us care more for the pompous Oliver than we might otherwise.

Cliché dictates that, in typical teen film fare, the object of a geek's affection should be either another female of the species or else the polar opposite, an unattainable goddess. Here, however, the girl is an emotion-hating pyromaniac with a yen for blackmail, herself only marginally more popular than the boy; in one great scene under a railway bridge, Jordana stands with a cigarette in her hand and a smirk on her lips, ordering Oliver to his knees.

It's not unusual for British TV comedians to graduate to directing feature films, but *Submarine* is very much a fully fledged feature rather

than just an extended comedy sketch show; it's also an adaptation that works even better on screen than the source novel did on page. Though Ayoade preserves Oliver's interior monologue from Joe Dunthorne's 2008 book, he capitalises on cinema's objective faculties to undermine Oliver's fantastical views on his new relationship – focusing, for instance, on Jordana's scrunched-up face as Oliver attempts a sloppy post-coital kiss.

Throughout, the deadpan approach to acting rules – especially for the excellent Craig Roberts, whose facial muscles are hardly flexed at all, except for the slight smile Oliver wears after he loses his virginity. This isn't, however, as distancing an effect as it might be; whether Oliver is horrified by the thought of Graham and his mum together or simply trying to trip his parents up with hypothetical questions, the emphasis stays on his big, brown puppy-dog eyes. Yet ultimately it's less Oliver's charm that wins us over than that of the film itself. Oliver may start off as Jordana's plaything, but soon young love

is being celebrated with fireworks and sunsets shot in such coy soft focus they feel like memories, each one accompanied by one of Alex Turner's wispy, delicate tunes. All of which could, of course, come across as rather corny, but Swansea's industrial backdrop (combined with Jordana's hatred of anything romantic) keeps the sentiment at bay.

Still, a heady nostalgia pervades this tale of bygone teenage years. Ayoade transports the noughties Oliver of Dunthorne's novel back to a time when teenagers had to pass notes in class, and communication was more direct and painful (without Facebook or email, Oliver has to resort to scrawling on his hand the reasons why Jordana should sleep with him). Indeed, with all the typewriters, Polaroids, super 8 footage and other near-obsolete technologies on display, *Submarine* feels like an ode to old analogue ways. *Crocodile Dundee* is in the cinemas, we're told, but the only other obvious period details are Graham Purvis's over-gelled mullet and his New Age self-promotional videos. Purvis's "mystic bullshit" light-show may terrify Oliver, but Ayoade revels in it, indulging the soft spot for gloriously cheesy 1980s effects he's shown in past directorial work (music videos for the likes of Vampire Weekend and Super Furry Animals, as well as the TV spoof *Garth Marenghi's Dark Place*).

Similarities between the titular horror author Garth Marenghi and *Submarine's* Graham reveal Ayoade's other passion: lampooning smarmy, self-satisfied twits. With Oliver he strikes a balance: he's not a teenage Alan Partridge, more a younger version





LOVE IN A COLD CLIMATE
Oliver (Craig Roberts, left) falls for Jordana (Yasmin Paige, right), while also suspecting his mother (Sally Hawkins, below) of an affair with neighbour Graham (Paddy Considine, opposite)

of *High Fidelity*'s list-loving Rob or *Peep Show* anorak Mark. But with Graham there's no restraint. Paddy Considine has a lot of fun with the caricature (and gets some killer lines), but it's noticeable that Ayoade's adults aren't quite as well developed as his teenagers. Sally Hawkins manages admirably to bring a sense of reality to her portrayal of Oliver's uptight mother, but – apart from some eloquent musing on depression by Oliver – Noah Taylor's sad face and droopy eyes are the only real clue to how father Lloyd is feeling. (In *Rushmore*'s Herman Blume, Anderson created a far more convincing world-weary parent.) Despite this, *Submarine* has some lovely observations on adulthood – as any film about teenagers should. “When you grow up, your heart dies,” is the aphorism voiced by the articulate loner in *The Breakfast Club* (1985). But for Jordana and Oliver, the opposite is true: growing up is when you go gooey in the middle and no longer want to burn someone's leg hair.

With its off-kilter stance, split-screen antics and musical interludes, *Submarine* feels very indebted to the Wes Anderson template of filmmaking, though Ayoade does temper his wackiness with the real particulars of teenage life (classroom banter, Jordana's eczema). When we see Oliver desolate over the loss of his girlfriend, his kindred spirit isn't so much Max Fischer as the forlorn, clueless Gregory in *Gregory's Girl* (1981). But Ayoade can be just as sly and self-conscious as Anderson when he wants to be. *Submarine* is littered with references to the *nouvelle vague* (from beaches and bicycles to the *Ma nuit chez Maud* poster on Oliver's bedroom wall), and takes full advantage of cinema's repertoire of jump cuts, zooms and freeze frames. But Ayoade's not just being playful for the sake of it. When Jordana and Oliver first lock lips, Oliver is so happy he keeps his eyes open, and the camera too is so excited it jumps about all over the place; for their second kiss, Ayoade does a slow 360-degree turn, savouring the moment.

For in the end, like the most successful forays into adolescent existence, *Submarine* doesn't quite feel like it's made by a grown up. *For credits and synopsis, see page 78*

Unsympathetic hero

Richard Ayoade on the cinematic influences on 'Submarine'

Traditionally in films, if the main character is an adolescent they're quite sympathetic. In films where you have a young hero, they're often portrayed as blameless. I liked that Oliver was mean and distant and selfish – there was something very interesting about that. And Oliver's voice was very funny and pompous. I've always liked books that deal with people of that age like 'The Catcher in the Rye', 'Franny and Zooey' and films like 'The Graduate', 'A man and a woman', 'Harold and Maude'.

The idea was that it shouldn't be set in a particular time frame. Partly because it didn't seem important and partly because I think you can just get into radiating a lot of information that doesn't have any bearing on the story. It's too specific, in a way. I like films where you don't really know what era they are from, especially films where you don't know the culture very well – like Satyajit Ray films. I don't know if the 'Apu' films are set in the childhood that he had or a slightly more modern time or an older era. They feel slightly fable-like. Or 'The 400 Blows': is that set in 1959 or is it in an era closer to Truffaut's childhood? It's just in a slightly remembered past. We tried to avoid things that



RICHARD AYOADE

might date the film, but I hope that there's nothing overly retro about it.

Erik [Wilson, the DP] and I really like Néstor Almendros as a DP and he, I guess, was the main influence in that he doesn't really light. It's natural light, often shooting at dawn or dusk and just trying to be simple with it – not being fancy, not having lots of big film lights...We were in Wales and it was autumn and it was freezing cold so there was a very specific kind of watery, thin light.

Age of the Dragons

USA/United Kingdom 2010

Director: Ryan Little

With Danny Glover, Vinnie Jones, Sofia Pernas, Larry Bagby
Certificate 12A 90m 42s

A few months ago, Gareth Edwards's low-budget *Monsters* tried to sell us the idea of a 'monster' film in which the fantastic creatures were little seen and mostly incidental to an essentially human drama. Now we have *Age of the Dragons*, a similarly monsters-light film directed by Ryan Little, and like *Monsters* it starts from a quirkily ambitious premise: *Moby Dick* with dragons.

Absurd as it sounds, the result is far more respectful of its classic source than, say, the recent *Gulliver's Travels*. There's no hiding the appropriation, with characters called Ahab, Queequeg and, inevitably, Ishmael. Instead of campy one-liners, much of the dialogue is paraphrased from the book, along with the pervasive voiceover. The film's course is predictable to anyone with a passing knowledge of Herman Melville's 1851 novel, as Ishmael (Corey Sevier) embarks on a hunt for a great white dragon, led by the pathologically obsessive captain Ahab (Danny Glover).

Melville told the world all he knew about whales, but the film's dragons are utter ciphers, no more defined than the combatants in *Mega Shark Vs Giant Octopus* (2009). The human

story, meanwhile, is a drab plod through a limbo world in which society depends on explosive dragon-vitriol; Ahab's vessel the *Pequod* is a dingy metal tank trundling through endless frosty valleys. (Though *how* it trundles is a complete mystery, since it has no visible mechanism.)

Viewers drawn by the top billing of Danny Glover and ex-footballer Vinnie Jones should lower their expectations. Neither of them camps up the material, leaving trash-film fans to mourn John Malkovich's absence (his villain in 2006's *Eragon*, another bad dragon picture, was the only memorable thing about it). The pipe-chewing Jones is actually rather likeable, even as he strains to channel Robert Shaw in *Jaws* (1975). Unfortunately (small spoiler), he bows out after half an hour, leaving us with Glover's one-note, demented Ahab.

Like Robert Zemeckis's animated *Beowulf* (2007), the film subverts the text and its anti-hero by playing up the females, with a dubious twist concerning the reason behind Ahab's obsessive quest. The actions of all the main characters are ultimately motivated by women past and present – as if to bear out the sailors' superstition that women on ships are bad luck. Newcomer Sofia Pernas plays Ahab's adopted daughter, who gets one early kickass scene and then takes a passive role for the rest of the story. The tinkering will annoy Melville buffs – but their complaints will be drowned out by the clamour of baffled monster-movie fans wanting the next *Godzilla*, to be directed by Gareth Edwards.

◆ Andrew Osmond

CREDITS

Directed by
Ryan Little
Produced by
McKay Daines
Steven A. Lee
Screenplay
McKay Daines
Story
Gil Aglaure
Anne Black
Based on the novel
Moby-Dick by Herman Melville
Director of Photography
Ryan Little
Edited by
John Lyde
Production Designer
Debbie Farrer
Music by/Music Supervisor
J Bateman

©Dragon Quest Productions, LLC
Production Companies
Koan presents in association with Metrodome, Cosmic Pictures and Incentive Films a Ryan Little film
A Dragon Quest production
Executive Producers
Gil Aglaure
Joe Pia
Peter Urle
Unit Production Manager
Steven A. Lee
Production Co-ordinator
Jill Nunley
Production Accountant
Jennifer Ricci
Location Manager
Jill Nunley
2nd Unit Locations
Clay Maw
Assistant Directors
1st: Troy Rohovitt
2nd: Cody Harbaugh
Script Supervisor
Kristin Ludwin
Casting
Kelly Martin Wagner
Dominika Posserén
B Camera Operators
T.C. Christensen
John Lyde
Brian Sullivan
Gaffers
John Raymer
2nd Unit:
Craig Wallace
Key Grips
John Farr
2nd Unit:
Alex Boyton
Josh Lee
Visual Effects Supervisor:
Matt Hoffman
Producer:
Ammon Jones
Visual Effects by
Blufire Studios
Special Effects Co-ordinator
Chuck Johnson
Set Decorator
Anthony Straga
Concept Artist
Kory Hubbell
Property Master
Bruce Wing
Construction Co-ordinators
Bryan Briggs
Cave:
Wayne Walser
'Pequod' Construction Co-ordinator
Ross Howard
Costume Designer
Anne Auernig
Wardrobe
Sonja Nelson
Jane Rose
2nd Unit:
Jane Rose

Key Hair/Make-up

Laurie Vukich
Special Effects Make-up Artist
Chris Hanson
Main Credits
Alan D. Williams
Native Digital VFX
Soundtrack
"Swallowtail Jig",
"Whiskey before
Breakfast" – Yosemite
Bay
Sound Design
Carlos Sanches
Sound Mixer
Steven C. Laneri
Re-recording Mixer/Supervising Sound Editor
Carlos Sanches
Stunt Co-ordinator
Kevin Jackson

CAST

Danny Glover
Captain Ahab
Vinnie Jones
Stubbs
Sofia Pernas
Rachel
Larry Bagby
Flask
Kepa Kruse
Queequeg
David Morgan
Starbuck
Corey Sevier
Ishmael
Raphael Cruz
young Ahab
Yanique Bland
Ahab's sister
Wayne Brennan
Elijah
McKay Daines
Peter Coffin
John Lyde
Tashtego
Scott Chun
Daggoo
Amy Micalizio
Brianna Aglaure
Savannah Ostler
barmaids
Brandon Anderson
Ryan Don Devey
Preston Gibbs
Gloria Hansen
Ross Howard
Chris Larsen
Eric Madsen
Christian Purser
Valeria Madsen
Mark Oliphant
Tom Post
David Turley
Nathan Harward
Erich Cannon
bar patrons
Clinton Purser
voice of young Ahab
Taylor Bateman
voice of Ahab's sister

In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Metrodome Distribution Ltd

8.162 ft +9 frames

All American Orgy

Director: Andrew Drazek

With Laura Silverman, Adam Busch, Aimee-Lynn Chadwick
Certificate 18 98m 19s

All American Orgy was dumped straight to DVD in the US, with cover art promising *National Lampoon*-esque T&A (tagline: "This Weekend Everyone Gets Some!"). The movie's funniest joke was on any kid who rented it – there are no pneumatic breasts here, no skin at all. It's difficult to imagine a dirty movie so completely free of any attempt at titillation.

The weekend-getaway setting does liberate the dramatis personae to behave with various degrees of nervous or bullying incivility towards one another, though it is never clear why *All American Orgy*'s characters have volunteered to interact socially, much less sexually. The plot is a series of conversational sessions allowing for incessant, graphic, deadening anatomical riffing. "Blow the cobwebs off your dick," commands Yasmine of uptight Alan. Gordon, dimly played by Jordan Kessler, romances his girlfriend with lines like, "Everything I eat I just barf up. Everything except your pussy." "Gotta treat the sluts like sluts and then we can get in their butts," muses Todd; later, rolling on ecstasy, he imagines aloud the "mountains of clits in the trash" in countries where female circumcision is practised, this during an inappropriate, intimate moment. Ted Beck, playing Todd and also credited with the alleged screenplay, has conceived his character as an outright sociopath – in one of our introductory views of him, he's urinating into his own mouth for laughs. A subplot involving the arrival of Edrick Browne's "big scary black guy" drug dealer, lured into the country



Battle cry: Vinnie Jones

SYNOPSIS In a medieval realm, dragons prey on people, who in turn hunt the dragons for the explosive vitriol in their bodies. Wanderer Ishmael and his friend Queequeg sign up with Captain Ahab, who pursues dragons in the *Pequod*, an armoured land vessel. Ahab is obsessively hunting the great white dragon that killed his sister.

On his first dragon hunt, a mistake by the inexperienced Ishmael results in the death of a crewman, Stubbs. Ishmael is attracted to Rachel, Ahab's adopted daughter, whose late father served with Ahab. Rachel and Ishmael's friendship angers Flask, another crewman, who has designs on Rachel. The crew find and slaughter a flock of sleeping worm dragons, but Ahab sees the white dragon and orders them to leave the carcasses.

When Ishmael argues with Ahab about his obsession, Ahab has him put in chains. The first mate, Starbuck, tries to mutiny but Ahab kills him. Ishmael is redeemed when he stops bandits taking the *Pequod*'s vitriol. Flask tries to rape Rachel; Ishmael drives him off. Flask is killed by the white dragon.

The survivors reach the dragon's mountain lair. Rachel is shocked to find the mummified corpse of her father, killed by Ahab's harpoon. Ahab claims that her father was a coward. Ahab also reveals a story from his own past: as a child he fled from the white dragon, leaving his sister to be killed. Ishmael tries to leave with Rachel; Ahab throws a harpoon at him but Queequeg takes the blow. The dragon returns. Ahab harpoons it, but is caught in the line and dashed to his death against the mountain as the dragon flies off. Ishmael and Rachel leave together.



Jordan Kessler, Yasmine Kittles

by Gordon's promises of "sexually liberated white women", serves no discernible purpose aside from padding out the running time and providing an opportunity for racial panic and awful punchlines: "Maybe give him some of those fresh-picked strawberries as a peace offering?" "They like watermelon!" Hey-o!

Mealy-mouthed and passively put-upon respectively, Adam Busch's Alan and Aimee-Lynn Chadwick's Rachel pass for repositories of audience sympathy in such company. The unlikeable lead is enjoying a renaissance on the American screen – *Curb Your Enthusiasm* rolls on, *The Social Network*'s portrait-of-the-mogul-as-a-young-prick reaps awards – but what does it profit a movie when, within minutes of being introduced to the characters as they drive out to Cummings Farm, one is already hoping for a fatal head-on collision?

Another ante-upping grossout sex-comedy pushing into transgressive-nihilistic territory (*American Pie Presents the Naked Mile* was practically Theatre of Cruelty) while completely discounting the transcendent, Joe Sarno, we hardly knew ya.

♦♦ Nick Pinkerton

Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the May issue.

SYNOPSIS Rural Louisiana, the present. Alan and Yasmine, a bickering thirtysomething couple, stop off at a liquor store. They're en route to a friend's lakeside cabin, Cummings Farm, where they're invited to attend their first orgy. Also on their way to the orgy are Rachel and her alcoholic boyfriend Gordon.

The couples arrive to be greeted by Todd and Tina, a married couple who've left the kids with her grandparents for the weekend. The eccentric Todd has prepared a programme of activities for the evening, leading up to the big event. Intrinsic problems in the relationships of all participants become apparent as introductory games are played. Partners are switched and paired off to 'talk', though Yasmine and Todd jump the gun and have sex. Gordon, unbeknown to the others, has invited his drug dealer Larenz, whose arrival increases the already high tensions – but the ecstasy he brings removes any remaining inhibitions. Gordon has a catastrophic public coupling with Tina, after which the party splinters in a welter of recriminations. When people start to leave, Todd becomes angry, revealing that he's trapped them at the farm by disabling their cars. Yasmine and Tina argue. Alan confesses his love for Rachel. Gordon punches Alan, then gets drunk with Todd. Wandering the property in a hallucinogenic trance, Larenz steps into a bear trap.

The following morning, Alan and Rachel commiserate with each other; Yasmine and Tina make up. Finding the wounded Larenz, everyone piles into his car and prepares to leave.

Anuvahood

United Kingdom 2011

Directors: Adam Deacon, Daniel Toland

With Adam Deacon, Femi Oyeniran, Ollie Barbieri, Jazzie Zonzolo

Anuvahood opens with a sly pre-credits distraction, as an amorphous huddle of hoodie-clad bodies gathers in the shadows for a fractious dispute. It's an exchange that appears to suggest – in the wake of glum inner-city melodramas *Kidulthood* (2006) and *Adulthood* (2008) – that what's in store is essentially more of the same. In fact, the film soon comes clean as a broad, breezy, rites-of-passage comedy, its stark London housing-estate setting shot in sunny, loud colours. At times the film skirts close to out-and-out parody, not least with its *Napoleon Dynamite*-esque roster of exaggerated fringe characters, from a steroidal weirdo kitted out in superhero Spandex to a Spanish exchange student with Zorro-like affectations.

It's the second low-budget feature (after 2010's *Shank*) to be released by youth-oriented production slate Gunslinger. Returning faces include co-director/writer/actor Adam Deacon and prolific producer/actor Terry Stone (cameoing here as a singularly unsavoury loan shark). Deacon is budding MC Kenneth, a virginal slacker who is disparaged by his misfit posse as a "wasteman" and lives at home with his debt-ridden parents. After a tantrum loses him his job at aptly named supermarket Laimsbury's, Kenneth turns to dealing on the estate in an effort to keep the bailiffs at bay. It's a venture that doesn't endear him to the neighbourhood's resident kingpin, Tyrone, a volatile, lisping bully with a sexual fetish for tomato ketchup (a wildly manic performance from Richie Campbell).

Although it's often crass and overstated, *Anuvahood* motors along competently enough as a loose ensemble piece, occasionally dropping in on minor characters (a nice gag has crestfallen yuppies cursing *Time Out* magazine for earmarking the forbidding area as up-and-coming). When following the initially banal routines of Kenneth and his friends (hopeless attempts to pick up girls, weed-fuelled PlayStation marathons, visits to embattled relatives), the film shows a self-deprecating blend of naturalism and goofiness that has a touch of early Shane Meadows about it (particularly 1996's *Smalltime*). Deacon, always watchable as Kenneth, isn't afraid to steep his protagonist in ridicule, as when the wannabe tough guy tries to show a new ally how connected he is but only succeeds in being acknowledged by a (stereotyped) gay couple and elderly ladies.

That said, the humour is mostly laboured, and there's a serious crisis of tone when Kenneth is inevitably forced into violent confrontation; all of a sudden, the film's cartoon tenor evaporates. Another Meadows film, *A Room for Romeo Brass* (1999), followed

SYNOPSIS London, the present. Kenneth, a budding MC who lives with his debt-ridden parents on a housing estate, impulsively quits his supermarket job. After being threatened by bailiffs, Kenneth's mother demands that he find another job or move out. Kenneth befriends the neighbourhood's new resident, Enrique, a Spanish exchange student, who eventually wins over Kenneth's disapproving mates. When the bailiffs ransack his home, Kenneth starts dealing cannabis to raise funds. Neighbourhood gangster Mike, angry that newcomers are dealing on his patch, enlists local bully Tyrone to maintain order. Tyrone ambushes Kenneth and steals a bag full of drugs and money. Kenneth sneaks into Tyrone's flat to retrieve the bag but is caught by Tyrone's gang. However, the gang allow Kenneth to escape after they recognise his voice from a popular DJ mix. Kenneth pockets Mike's gun to protect himself but ultimately takes a beating from Tyrone. When Tyrone turns on Enrique, Kenneth fights back, overpowering Tyrone. Before Tyrone can use Mike's gun on Kenneth, Mike appears on the scene. Identifying his gun, Mike humiliates Tyrone for picking on the youngsters. Kenneth gets his job back at the supermarket.

a similarly queasy trajectory to arresting effect, but Deacon and co-director Daniel Toland, despite moments of considerable confidence behind the camera, aren't in possession of the subtlety required to juggle the contrasting moods. There's definitely no shortage of enthusiasm here, but you can't help feeling that ultimately *Anuvahood* was much more fun to make than it is to watch.

♦♦ Matthew Taylor

CREDITS

Directed by

Adam Deacon

Daniel Toland

Produced by

Paul Van Carter

Nick Taussig

Daniel Toland

Terry Stone

Written by

Adam Deacon

Michael Vu

Director of Photography

Felix Wiedemann

Edited by

Seth Bergstrom

Production Design by

Matthew Button

Music

Chad Hobson

@Anuvahood the Movie Limited

Production Companies

Revolver Entertainment

presents a Gunslinger

production and Gateway

Films co-production in

association with

Creativity Media

A film by Adam Deacon

Executive Producers

Justin Marciano

Yogita Puri

Mike Diamond

Ajay Parkash

Tony Jimenez

Co-producers

Patrick Fischer

Peter F. Gardner

Neeraj Pathak

Laurence Brown

Line Producer

Andy Chapman

Associate Producers

Alex Georgiou

Lucy Taylor

Richard Turner

Richard Kondal

Ben Cain

Production

Co-ordinator

Kate Glover

Location Manager

Richard George

Post-production Supervisor

Patrick Fischer

Assistant Directors

1st: Adam Morris

2nd: Alex Kaye-Besley

Script Supervisors

Lola Dauda

Rene Bamaban

Camera Operator

B: Sam Care

Steadicam

Marc Covington

Gaffers

Alex Edyvean

Sam Alberg

Key Grip

Warwick Drucker

Visual Effects Artist

David Chapman

Art Director

Daniela Faggio

Set Decorator

Cathy Featherstone

Production Buyer

Mark Stevenson-Ellis

Property Master

Marius Pogaceanu

Costume Design

Rob Nicholls

Wardrobe Supervisor

Lorna Gillieron

Make-up/Hair Designer

Elle Bard

Make-up Artists

Chloe Mutton-Phillips

Natalie Abzadeh

Main Title Design

Mike Ralph

Music Supervisors

Arnold Hattlingh

Dave Goulding

Dominic Bastyra

Soundtrack

"If I Had Changed My

Mind" – Tom Vek

Sound Recordist

Kieron Teather

Re-recording Mixers

Richard Kondal

Alex Joseph

Brendan Nicholson

Supervising Sound Editor

Alex Joseph

Co-supervising Sound Editor

Richard Kondal

Stunt Co-ordinators

Levan Doran

Vincent Ginger Keane

CAST

Adam Deacon

Kenneth

Femi Oyeniran

Bookie

Ollie Barbieri

Enrique

Jazzie Zonzolo

T.J.

Michael Vu

Lesoi

Richie Campbell

Tyrone

Jaime Winstone

Yasmin

Perry Benson

Brian

Linda Robson

Pauline

Ashley Walters

Cracks

Richard Blackwood

Russell

Eddie Kadi

Tunde

Paul Kaye

Tony

Darwood Grace

Omar

Leon Black

Clint

Lethal Bizzle

Lloyd



Mellow yellow: Femi Oyeniran, Ollie Barbieri

Big Narstie
supermarket boy
Alanna Flynn
supermarket girl
James Rainer
Joe
Carmel O'Connor
single mum
Dolly Adams
Mrs Dennison
Levi Roots
busker
Bhasker Patel
shopkeeper
Alison Mason
yardie woman
Charlie Tomlin
yardie man
Wil Johnson
Mike
Mark Cooper Harris
Tommy
Samantha
Scarborough
gangster girl 1
Rachael Howard
gangster girl 2
Jammer
Murkeman
Jeyda Hassan
Lily
Connor Donaghey
Jack
Terry Stone
Terry
Jason Maza
Darren
Doon MacKichan
Patricia
Alex Macqueen
Edward
Ben Stylianou
café owner
Josh Enright
camp guy 1
Arnie Hewitt
camp guy 2
Portia Freno
Persia
Sabrina Thompson-
Marshall
Carly
Aisleyne
Mara
Sacha Chang
Nicole
Carmel Roche
Keshia
Kiem Vu
Kim
Michael Maris
Big T
Ashley Chin
Mo
Jen Nadine Merchant
goon girl
Giggs
nephew
Kevin Wenman
policeman 1
Matt Barr
policeman 2
Jocelyn Jee Esien
Tasha
Terry Seager
postman
Tiryn Iron
Craig
Mz Bratt
Shay
Cornell John
uncle
Faruk Dogan
Mrs Coral Gonsawes
Flavia Apio
Christine Dingle
Parfaitte Batousol
David Nevitt
Karim Lamquindaz
Ruby Jarrett Morrow
Jean Nevitt
Dilawar Ali
Mary Negash
Santhokkie Nagulenoran
Courtney Davis
India Barclay
Leon Hinkson
Junior Tavernier
Demir Sezer
Daniel Nield
Cris Le Maitre Jr
Carjez Best-Bryan
Lisa Gifford
Samantha Sagoo
Rudy Valentino Grant
Daniel Braveboy
Sade Lewis
Eva Batousol
Zel Powell
Daniel Johnson

Viviana Mendes
Mercedes-Rianne
Powis-McIntosh
Cassie Harwood
David Adeleye
Sarah Okwuolu
Jasmine Sim
Joshua Enright
Manila Lippa
Meriam Kouadri
Arnie Hewitt
Phoenix James
Olivia James
Gilbaut Batouzol
Chabris Napier-
Lawrence
Sarah Wusu
Estelle Blackwell
Vanessa Graham
Cara Dawkins
Killa Ki
Nicole Colville
Caroline Dunn
Villen
Ricky Logan
Patricia Dann
Darren Brown
Joseph Jamel
Sarah Ebokayuk
Chuka Ebinum
Dylan Campbell
Eli James Aidoo
Kyle Tibby
Simeon Carrington
Leon Boothe
Gloria Neville
Peta-Simone Powis-
McIntosh
Andre Pierre
Esther Eastwood
Daniel Winston
Natasha Felix
Catherine Gordon
Chelsea Lewis
Tokunbo Sode
Ben Arumadri
Kaine Lewis
Romey Gene
Robi Miah
Sean Myles
David Nagib
Kenny Domingo
George Keywood
Chelsea-Marie Gall
Jordan Parrish
Fatima Ashaye
Aaron Bachen
Marvin Hamilton-
Chambers
Latia Inniss
Ryan Mitchell
Victor Olurin
Ashley Browne
Benjamin Adeyemi
Shah Khan
Stephen Conway
Naomi Brooks
Wesley Topham
Rebecca Carrington
Sarah Okae
Tamar Moseley
Stuart Freestone
Zahid Mohammed
Salim Jebari
Nick Heel
Yassin Bourgad
Andrew Williamson
Victor Cacau
Neil MacAulay
Junior Gayle
Keith Milner
Yasin Joveid
Parfaitte
Hannah Raehse-
Felstead
Lucas Penn
Alice Lovell
Nico Rogers Williams
Nicky Rampling
supporting cast

Dolby Digital
In Colour

Distributor
Revolver Entertainment



That shrinking feeling: Freddie Highmore

Arthur and the Great Adventure

Director: Luc Besson
With Freddie Highmore, Stacy Ferguson, Mia Farrow, Jimmy Fallon
Certificate PG 107m 14s

Like his young hero Arthur, who can't resist another call to shrink down and join his teeny beleaguered friends the Minimoy, Luc Besson has forged ahead regardless with a sequel to his critically mauled family film *Arthur and the Invisibles* (2006). Like the hyperkinetic original, the new movie mixes live-action sequences with conceptual artist Patrice Garcia's garishly animated micro-world of tiny elves-cum-trolls, the final effect resembling *The Borrowers* on acid. Much painstaking CGI and creative effort has gone into rendering the Minimoy's world, but after a quick dip into it, Besson's script – which is based on the third of his quartet of Arthur books – perversely chooses to set its action above ground. It takes an age, moreover, to get its story started, Arthur only discovering the villain Maltazard's plot to escape and take over the human world about a third of the way through, after a host of manufactured difficulties and a plotless Minimoy reunion. In fact, the whole narrative has a 'filler' feel, as if marking time between the first film's

opening salvo and the forthcoming finale of Arthur's adventures. Much screen time is expended on the two-centimetre hero and his minute pals Princess Selenia and Betameche engaging in a series of *Toy Story*-style chases around Arthur's grandparents' house on dinky trains, planes and automobiles. No small space is left unexploited (this is *le cinéma du nook*), but only a crunching, fast-paced fight on a toy train provides a brief and welcome reminder of Besson's action credentials. It's a film of relentless racing and chasing, which soon starts to feel pointlessly busy, to no great effect. Still, Maltazard, a noseless, skeletal figure of urbane evil, impresses thanks to Lou Reed's chilling voice work, a significant improvement on David Bowie's overworked portrayal in the first film, as is Selenia Gomez's perky takeover of the role of Princess Selenia. After the age-inappropriate Madonna, she's a better fit with Freddie Highmore's engagingly game Arthur, who eschews the smart-alec irony that's currently de rigueur for animated heroes. His wide-eyed enjoyment makes the film tonally something of a throwback to child-centred fantasy adventure features of the 1980s, such as *The NeverEnding Story*. But while it has their innocence, its overdesigned, revved-up action is no match for the rich storytelling and character creation that made them so compelling for children. **◆◆ Kate Stables**
Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the May issue.

SYNOPSIS Connecticut, 1963. Thirteen-year-old Arthur receives a distress call from his friends the Minimoy, and shrinks himself into their tiny subterranean world using a telescope portal. Displaced tyrant Maltazard uses it to escape into the human world, achieve human size and finagle his way into Arthur's grandparents' house. Arthur and his friends Princess Selenia and her brother Betameche follow him into the house via the water pipes, where they are chased by Maltazard's estranged son Darkos, whom they befriend. Maltazard forces Arthur's grandfather to hand over a growing potion, using it to supersize his mosquito-riding army, who make an assault on the local town. Arthur, Selenia and Betameche persuade a bee colony which makes the growing potion to give them some, and a full-size Arthur takes on Maltazard's forces in town. Arthur and Darkos are captured, but Selenia and Betameche arrive riding a bee and inject Maltazard with a shrinking potion, allowing the US army to recapture the town. Arthur and his family celebrate, and imprison the tiny Maltazard under a glass in the kitchen cabinet.

Ballast

USA 2007
Director: Lance Hammer
With Michael J. Smith Sr, Jim Myron Ross, Tarra Riggs, Johnny McPhail
Certificate 15 96m 3s

The Mississippi Delta may well be the home of the blues, but for the hard-pressed African-Americans in Lance Hammer's Sundance-winning family drama *Ballast* there's little sense of their lives existing within a communal recognition of suffering and transcendence. Unlike Charles Burnett's *Killer of Sheep* (1977), an earlier portrait of hardscrabble black lives unfolding to a rich soundtrack of blues and soul, and an obvious forebear to *Ballast* in its independent aesthetic, there's not a single note of music here, just the natural sounds of the landscape and the often inarticulate voices of its inhabitants. That's certainly in keeping with a film in which the fortunes of a convenience store owner and a cleaner following the death of his twin brother and her estranged husband (one and the same man) inch forwards in a scattered rural environment where only the kindness of an immediate neighbour or cheery small-talk in the shop give any sense of participating in society at all. There's no community nurturing Lawrence, Marlee and her son James, who's starting to mix with the wrong crowd: if these folks don't look after themselves, no one else will. All of which explains why Lawrence looks to his small business to keep it together, and why Marlee wants to take her son out of school, away from the drugs and weapons, and teach him at home. We see Lawrence standing outside a derelict radio building, an indication that he once had dreams of reaching out over the airwaves. Those dreams have now gone. Writer-director Hammer (an architecture major who funded this debut by designing digital effects for Hollywood blockbusters including *Batman & Robin*) rehearsed his cast of non-professionals over a period of months, drawing on their backgrounds to shape the story rather than his own background in white California. The cultural and ethnic boundaries being crossed here are, however, much less significant than the way *Ballast* hovers between naturalistic engagement with real lives and an artful, expressive refraction of those experiences, between drawing the audience into a sequential narrative built on dramatic revelations and keeping us at bay by withholding information to purposeful effect. The general austerity of the piece is at some remove from the rhapsodic, Malick-influenced small-town ferment of David Gordon Green's *George Washington* (2000), yet Hammer's approach, like Green's, confidently declares his faith in a regionalist independent cinema seeking its own path rather than following the 'indie' trends of audience-friendly quirky comedy. We're certainly nodding in the direction of the Dardenne brothers here, though it's not hard to sense that

SYNOPSIS Rural Mississippi, present day. When his twin brother Darius dies following a drug overdose, Lawrence makes a failed suicide attempt. After recuperating in hospital, he returns home but is still clearly numbed by his experiences. He reopens his convenience store, jointly owned with his late sibling.

Meanwhile, 12-year-old James is gravitating towards a nearby crack house, and has stolen Lawrence's pistol. His mother Marlee has her own drugs issues. After losing her job, Marlee visits Lawrence; Darius was her estranged husband and she claims co-ownership of his property. She wants to sell the house and the store, but later softens her attitude and starts working at the shop – only intermittently open since Darius's death. Lawrence develops new respect for Marlee after she gets the place up and running single-handedly, and is willing to help her remove James from the local education system so that they can home-school him themselves. They seem to be setting aside old animosities but Lawrence misreads the situation and makes a clumsy sexual advance. Later he retrieves his pistol from under the sofa where James has left it, and discovers the bullets in the field.

Marlee takes James and leaves; Lawrence goes with them in the car, perhaps signalling a new start for all three.

the major creative influence on the film is actually photographer William Eggleston, since the combination of watery winter light and saturated colours in British cameraman Lol Crawley's distinctive palette, not to mention the story's succession of evocative non sequiturs (including the opener, where James sets a flock of marsh birds into veering flight), seems strongly aligned to the desolate, haunting panorama of the faded South played out in Eggleston's portfolio.

Like Eggleston, Hammer favours an air of mystery, tantalising us with a sense of momentary intrusion into scenarios that have been unspooling without us. Key moments such as Darius's death or his twin brother Lawrence's suicide attempt are kept off screen, and it takes a while for the nature of the relationship binding these two with Marlee and James to be revealed. The effect is to dignify the characters' experiences by suggesting that not everything about them is open to our understanding, and yet this approach necessarily keeps the audience at a certain remove. Set against, say, the not dissimilar approach in Kelly Reichardt's films, *Ballast* (which has taken a full three years to make it from Sundance to UK distribution) rather lacks her facility for delivering the pleasures of storytelling without ever seeming unduly superficial about it. The result is a film whose craft and determined individuality achieve an intermittent bleak soulfulness, but one that leaves us admiring the conception rather than feeling that we've connected with the people on screen. **♦♦ Trevor Johnston**

CREDITS

Directed by
Lance Hammer
Produced by
Lance Hammer
Written by
Lance Hammer
Director of Photography
Lol Crawley
Edited by
Lance Hammer
Production Designer
Jerrel Levanway

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Production Company
An Alluvial Film Company production
Executive Producers
Andrew Adamson
John J. Hammer
Mark Johnson
Aimee Shieh
Production Manager
Todd Stauffer
Production Co-ordinator
Joy Parikh
Production Accountants
Todd Stauffer
Joy Parikh
Assistant Directors
1st: Juan Mazara
2nd: Spencer Cryder
2nd: Robert Saba
2nd: Ben Chester
Casting Director
Francine Thomas
Gaffer
Len Stanga
Key Grip
David Ashby
Visual Effects Supervisor
Kelvin McIlwain
Visual Effects
Illusion Arts, Inc
Special Effects Co-ordinator
Mike Weesner
Art Director
Mary Goodson
Costume Designer
Caroline Eselin-Schaefer
Special Effects Make-up
Ben Chester
Titles/Opticals
Title House Digital
Music Supervisors
John Bissell
Jerry Lousteau
Soundtrack
"I'll Wait on Jesus" – The Canton Gospel Chorus
Sound Designer
Kent Sparling
Production Sound Mixer
Sam Watson
Re-recording Mixer
Kent Sparling
Supervising Sound Editor
Julia Shirar
Narcotics Consultant
Rick McDaniels

CAST

Michael J. Smith Sr
Lawrence
Jim Myron Ross
James
Tarra Riggs
Marlee
Johnny McPhail
John
Ventress Bonner
Jimez Alexander
Jean Paul Guillory
Marcus Alexander
Marquice Alexander
Lawrence Jackson
teenagers
Jeremy Jordan
Steve Cabell
paramedics
Sam Dobbins
ambulance driver
Neil Pettigrew
dispatcher voice
Dr Sanjib Shrestha
Dr Shrestha
Carol Clark
Lee G. Beck
Michael Johnston
Valeace Bright
nurses
Cassandra Campbell
lab
Darla Johnson Lloyd
respiratory
Lance Anderson
radiology
Albert Jay Levy
social worker
Edward Whitehead II
forensic pathologist
Patricia Lee
Earl Ray
Marlee's neighbours
Zachary Coleman
attorney
Rafe D. Simpson
Simpson's grocery clerk
Donald Johnson
Hurstine Watts
Lucky's 49 customers
Fredrick Harris
Willie Nason
beer delivery men
Sam Watson
Mary Goodson
Lucky's 49 supplier voices
Anita R. Ballard
elementary school administrator
Juneau
Juneau

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Axiom Films Limited

8,645 ft +4 frames

Barney's Version

Canada/Italy 2010

Director: Richard J. Lewis

With Paul Giamatti, Rosamund Pike, Minnie Driver, Dustin Hoffman
Certificate 15 133m 40s

Mordecai Richler's 1997 swansong comes to the screen courtesy of *Whale Music* director Richard J. Lewis in an ambitious production that mostly makes a very creditable fist of catching the novel's rumbustious Rabelaisian-Jewish tone. It's helped immensely by a virtuoso central performance from Paul Giamatti as Barney Panofsky, a successful television producer whose personal and psychological life is much troubled, not least by three traumatic marriages and the unsolved death of his best friend Boogie, possibly at Barney's own hand. J.D. Salinger's Holden Caulfield might have turned out like this if he'd been a Montreal Jew grown to curmudgeonly middle age.

Significantly simplifying Richler's sprawling narrative and almost entirely eliminating its political/historical backdrop, screenwriter Michael Konyves focuses on close personal relationships. Barney deliberately introduces his policeman father Izzy (a delectably roguish Dustin Hoffman in Leslie Phillips mode) into high society, gleefully encouraging him to subvert the proceedings with outrageously off-colour anecdotes. He cares so little about his second wife (Minnie Driver, channelling every Jewish princess tic to hilariously horrifying effect) that he can't even recall her name – and in any case he plans to run off with wedding guest Miriam (Rosamund Pike) before the nuptials are even concluded. Fans of Larry David's corrosively confrontational *Curb Your Enthusiasm* (or indeed Ted Kotcheff's 1974 adaptation of Richler's *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*) will be more than familiar with this territory.

Barney's first marriage was to Clara (Rachelle Lefevre), a blissfully bohemian existence in Henry Miller-

inspired Roman exile, abruptly terminated by the kind of chance-based tragedy that might be authentically Shakespearean were it not undercut by the arrival of her father, another grotesque Jewish stereotype whose anecdote about trying to revive her at the age of 12 via chicken soup down a funnel reminds Barney of what he's trying to flee. The film is crammed with similarly memorable minor characters: the chainsmoking Italian doctor who more than matches Barney for lack of tact, Uncle Irv and his ability to spot anti-Semitism at every turn, love rival Blair and his achingly fashionable causes.

Barney's third wife, Miriam, is notionally a far better match, though that marriage is also ultimately brought low by Barney's self-disgust and increasing professional jealousy. Although he's singled out among his Rome-based comrades as the only one with a proper job, he's all too conscious of his own creative limitations, despises the innuendo-riddled romantic TV soap *O'Malley of the North* that made his reputation (David Cronenberg and Atom Egoyan can be spotted directing episodes, an in-joke aimed at Canadian film buffs), and self-deprecatingly calls his company Totally Unnecessary Productions. It's a tribute to Giamatti's performance that he manages to strike a perfect balance between Barney the boor and the surreptitious performer of good deeds – a running gag involving over-the-hill actress Solange and her Bulgarian fanbase gives us ample glimpses of both.

The film's biggest flaw is in the final act, and not just because it skirts the kind of schmaltz that Barney himself would despise. The onset of Alzheimer's (signalled from the opening scenes) worked brilliantly on the page, where Barney's increasing factual sloppiness in his written memoir is counterbalanced by corrective footnotes from an attentive editor, but the film offers no equivalent. Accordingly, despite notionally giving us 'Barney's version' of events, we're increasingly forced into Miriam's shoes, watching the light go out of her ex-husband's eyes – and with it, much of the life of a film that otherwise makes agreeably brisk work of a lengthy running time.

♦♦ Michael Brooke

SYNOPSIS Montreal, the present. Television producer Barney Panofsky is given a book about an unsolved murder in which he was the prime suspect.

Rome, 1974. Barney hangs out with friends Leo, Cedric and Boogie, and marries Clara after getting her pregnant. The baby is not only stillborn but also mixed-race. Barney leaves Clara, and she commits suicide.

Montreal, 1975. Barney marries a rich Jewish heiress (whose family strongly disapproves of Barney and his policeman father Izzy) but falls in love with Miriam, one of the wedding guests, chasing her on to her train home. The marriage ends when Barney, to his (concealed) delight, catches his new wife in bed with Boogie, who is staying at their lakeside cottage. In the ensuing row, Boogie falls into a lake, possibly having been accidentally shot by Barney. The police fail to find Boogie's body.

Barney and Miriam marry and raise two children. Radio producer Blair rescues them after a motorboat breakdown, and hires Miriam as a presenter. Izzy dies in a massage parlour. Following a row, Miriam temporarily leaves Barney, who has a fling with an actress; he confesses to Miriam, who divorces him and marries Blair. When expressing his shock about his old friend Leo's death, Barney is told that he died a year earlier and that he himself was a pallbearer at the funeral. Barney succumbs to Alzheimer's, and is nursed by Miriam. Boogie's remains are finally found, with no gunshot wound. Snow falls gently over Barney's gravestone, which also bears Miriam's name.

Jim Myron Ross



CREDITS

Directed by
Richard J. Lewis
Produced by
Robert Lantos
Screenplay
Michael Koryves
Based on the novel by
Mordecai Richler
Director of Photography
Guy Dufaux
Editor
Susan Shipton
Production Designer
Claude Paré
Music
Pasquale Catalano

@Three Amigos
Productions Inc. Three
Amigos (Québec)
Productions Inc. and
Fandango S.R.L.
Production Companies
Serendipity Point Films
presents in association
with Fandango and Lyla
Films a Robert Lantos
production
A Richard J. Lewis film
Produced in association
with Telefilm Canada,
Corus Entertainment,
Astral Media, Québec –
Crédit d'impôt cinéma
et télévision – Gestion
SODEC, SODEC Société
de développement des
entreprises culturelles –
Québec, Canadian
Broadcasting
Corporation, The Harold
Greenberg Fund,
Ontario Media
Development
Corporation
Produced with the
participation of Telefilm
Canada, Corus
Entertainment, Astral,
Sodec Québec, CBC,
Harold Greenberg Fund,
Ontario Media
Development
Corporation
Produced with the
assistance of Movie
Central, The Movie
Network, Super Ecran,
Canadian Film or Video
Production Tax Credit
Developed with the
assistance of the
COGECO Program
Development Fund
Executive Producer
Mark Musselman
Co-producers
Lyse Lafontaine
Domenico Proccacci
An Lantos
Line Producer
Rome Unit:
Gianluca Leunni
Production Managers
Hélène Ross
Rome Unit:
Marco Greco
Production Supervisors
Rome Unit:
Valeria Licurgo
NY Unit:
Kim Haden
Production Co-ordinators
Yves Desjardins
Rome Unit:
Claudia Cimmino
Production Accountants
Christian Fluet
Rome Unit:
Andrea Pina
Location Managers
Benoît Mathieu
Rome Unit:
Diego Morina
Pierluigi Potier
NY Unit:
Lauri Pitkus
Kellie Morrison

Post-production Supervisor
Douglas Wilkinson
2nd Unit/Visual Effects Director
Claude Paré
Assistant Directors
1st: David Webb
2nd: Johanne Caporici
Rome Unit
1st: Luigi Spoletini
2nd: Alessandra Fortuna
Script Supervisor
Marie La Haye
Casting
Dierdre Bowen
Nina Gold
Pam Dixon
Director – Montreal:
Andrea Kenyon
Director – Rome Unit:
Teresa Razzauti
Camera Operators
Sylvaine Dufaux
B. François Dagnault
Rome Unit
A. Alessandro Bolognesi
Gianmaria Majorana
NY Unit
Phil Oetiker
Steadicam Operators
François Dagnault
Rome Unit:
Alessandro Bolognesi
Gaffers
Paul Vau
Rome Unit:
Daniele Cafolla
Key Grips
Keith Kerr
Rome Unit:
Paolo Frasson
2nd Unit/Visual Effects
Robert B. Baylis
NY Unit:
Colin Keech
Visual Effects Supervisor
Louis Morin
Digital Visual Effects
Modus FX
Special Effects Co-ordinator
Ryal Cosgrove
Art Directors
Michèle Laliberté
Rome Unit:
Livia Borgognoni
Set Designer
Céline Lampron
Key Set Decorator
Élise de Blois
Set Decorators
Louise Cova
Daniel Hamelin
Mane-Soleil Denormée
Jacques Rajotte
Rome Unit:
Alessia Anfuso
Clara's/Leo's Artwork Created by
Mane-Josée Perreault
Property Masters
Simone Leclerc
Set:
Denis Hamel
Rome Unit:
Sebastiano Murer
Roberta Aiello
NY Unit:
Mark Harrington
Construction Supervisor
Réjean Brochu
Costume Designer
Nicolella Massone
Make-up Design
Adrien Morot
Key Make-up Artist
Rome Unit:
Micheline Trépanier
Key Hair Stylists
Réjean Goderre
Rome Unit:
Mauro Tamagnini
Hairdresser
Mane-France Cardinal
Title Design
Sam Javanrouh
Optix Digital Pictures
Music Performed by
Orchestra Roma
Sinfonietta
Conducted by:
Alessandro Molinari

Music Supervisor
Liz Gallacher
Soundtrack
"Bang a Gong (Get It On)" – T. Rex; "Vita
Francesco" – Nicholas
Fasullo; "Deb Sombo" –
Jimmy McGriff; "I'm
Wanderin'" – John Lee
Hooker; "Moon Pie" –
Poncho Sanchez; "You
Stepped out of a
Dream"; "Rock the Boat";
"Out of Sight"; "The Way
You Look Tonight" – The
Directors; "Solar" –
Miles Davis; "All Souls" –
Jaymay; "Prowlin'" –
Whitfield Brothers;
"River Runs Deep" – J.J.
Cale; "Sunshine
Superman" – Donovan;
"Turn Me On" – Nina
Simone; "Dance Me to
the End of Love" –
Leonard Cohen; "No
Power" – Absolut; "I'm
Your Man" –
Leonard Cohen; "I Don't
Want to Hear It
Anymore" – Shelby
Lynne
Choreographers
Jennifer Nichols
Anisa Tejpar
Production Sound Recordist
Claude La Haye
Re-recording Mixers
Lou Solakofski
Stephane Carner
Supervising Sound Editors
Jane Tattersall
Fred Brennan
Stunt Co-ordinator
Jean Frenette
Cultural Consultant
Manly Berger
Wedding Consultant
Lesley Hoppenheim

CAST

Paul Giamatti
Barney Panofsky
Rosamund Pike
Miam Grant-Panofsky
Minnie Driver
the 2nd Mrs P
Rachelle Lefevre
Clara 'Chambers'
Chamofsky
Scott Speedman
Boogie
Bruce Greenwood
Blair
Macha Grenon
Solange
Anna Hopkins
Kate Panofsky
Jake Hoffman
Michael Panofsky
Mark Addy
Detective O'Heare
Saul Rubinek
Chamofsky
Thomas Trabacchi
Leo
Clé Bennett
Cedric
Harvey Atkin
2nd Mrs P's father
Massimo Wertmuller
Rome doctor
Howard Jerome
Uncle Iv
Linda Sorensen
2nd Mrs P's mother
Dustin Hoffman
Izzy Panofsky
Paul Gross
Constable O'Malley of
the North
Atom Egoyan
O'Malley director 1
Mark Camacho
T/J Productions
executive 1
David Pryde
T/J Productions
executive 2
Paula Jean Hixson
bartender at Grumpy's
Marica Pellegrinelli
"The Countess"

Dominico Minutoli
judge at Rome wedding
Sam Stone
fundraising target 1
Burney Lieberman
fundraising target 2
Morty Bercovitch
fundraising target 3
Pauline Little
2nd Mrs P's
housekeeper
Robin Kazdan
Maury Chaykin
wedding guests
Larry Day
bartender at wedding
Sheila Hymans
rabbi's wife
Len Richman
rabbi
Howard Rosenstein
cousin Jeff
Ted Kotcheff
train conductor
Brittany Lee Drisdelle
girl at cafe
David Cronenberg
O'Malley director 2
Kyle Switzer
production assistant
Rebecca Croll
receptionist 1
Steve Bienstock
NY restaurant waiter
Arthur Holden
notary
Zack Kifell
young Michael Panofsky
Simone Richler
young Kate Panofsky
Denys Arcand
maître d' at Ritz
Malire d' Grosser
Mr Dalhousie
Pascale Bourbeau
woman at cemetery
Ellen David
massage parlour
madame
Katia Di Perna
masseuse
Marina Eva
Leo's girlfriend
Sandra Lavoie
Barney's one night
stand
Harry Standjofski
Dr Morty
Ivana Shein
receptionist 2
Melanie St. Pierre
O'Malley's new co-star
Tarah Schwartz
reporter
Richard Lewis
pathologist
The Directors
wedding band:
Randi Katz
Tony Picciuto
vocals
Jean Boutin
Margaret Stellick
saxophone
Michael Cartile
trumpet
Joe Primiani
electric bass
Frank Bufo
guitar
Fred Manricks
keyboards
Thomas Brent Martin
drums

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]
Distributor
Universal Pictures
International UK & Ire
12,029 ft +5 frames
Italian theatrical title
La versione di Barney



Hitting the road: 'Benda Bilili!'

Benda Bilili!

France/Belgium 2010
Directors: Renaud Barret,
Florent de la Tullaye
Certificate PG 86m 29s

At a cultural moment when every TV talent-show contestant, win or lose, has to talk about their 'journey' and the extraordinary distance they have come, *Benda Bilili!* provides a powerful corrective dose of perspective. Beginning on the night-time streets of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with a homeless child in the background discussing whether or not to steal the cameraman's bag, it slowly introduces its cast of characters: the musicians of Staff Benda Bilili. All are homeless, and most paraplegic, getting around on wheelchairs recycled from bicycle parts and pedalled with the hands. They sing songs about "life on cardboard", and their instruments are as improvised as their wheelchairs – a drummer uses upturned plastic bowls and pieces of wood, a soloist plays a monochord made from a tin can and a twig. By the end of the film they have recorded their debut album and embarked on a prestigious tour of European festivals.

Benda Bilili! zeroes in on two individuals to provide focus. One, 'Papa' Ricky, is the paternal but driven character who leads the group. He's both boundlessly enthusiastic and amazingly stoic – even when, during an early recording session, the homeless shelter that provides the group with its base burns to the ground. The second is Roger, a street kid whose conviction that his monochord will be his passport to

worldly success is as unbending as Ricky's own vision. The film follows them over five years as Roger transforms from a scrawny adolescent struggling to play in key to a young man who swaggers on to European stages, rolling around on his back Hendrix-style, eliciting eerie and insinuating solos from the same homemade string-and-tin instrument he began on. Roger also provides a fantastic scene of family dynamics: on the eve of the group's European tour, his mother is interested only in raging at him to prove his uncles wrong, to exonerate her from the charge that he's a feckless waster. Slumped on the sofa, Roger gives a stare that's not so much a thousand-yarder, more a whatever-the-precise-distance from there to France's Eurockéennes festival.

Directors Renaud Barret and Florent de la Tullaye have two previous credits, a documentary feature (*Victoire Terminus*, 2008) and a short (*Jupiter's Dance*, 2006), both set in Kinshasa. Their directorial approach in *Benda Bilili!* is discretion to the point of invisibility – no one appears on camera except the film's subjects, and there are no prompting questions heard off camera. There's an integrity to this fly-on-the-wall ethos, but here it also raises certain questions for the viewer: since the film begins in 2004, four years before the group's album is finally released – when Papa Ricky is still having trouble gathering the musicians together to rehearse – how did it even come about? If the filmmakers are also the producers of the group's album, shouldn't the documentary be a little clearer about this? The extent to which the act of observation changes what's being observed is never really touched on, despite occasional hints.

But Barret and de la Tullaye edit and pace their film skilfully. At the start, Staff Benda Bilili's music sounds much like their found and improvised instruments look: scraps precariously held together, on the verge of imminent collapse. But it gets ever tighter as the years of rehearsing in the grounds of Kinshasa's zoo pass and the film progresses. And the finale has a genuine and defiant joy, with an invisible class of person elevated to maximum visibility on stage, their disabilities neutralised and overcome.

♦♦ Sam Davies

CREDITS

Directed by

Renaud Barret
Florent de la Tullaye

Produced by

Yves Chanvillard
Nadim Cheikhrouha

Written by

Renaud Barret
Florent de la Tullaye

Photography

Renaud Barret
Florent de la Tullaye

Editor

Jean-Christophe Hym
Kinshasa Art Director
Kibini Kabeya

@Screen Runner, La Belle Kinoise, Studio 37

Production Companies

Screenrunner & La Belle Kinoise present in co-production with O.L. Production, Studio 37

with the participation of Canal+, Ciné Cinéma, Commune Image, Dragon Films with the support of FCM, SACEM, Procrep-Angoa

A film by Renaud Barret and Florent de la Tullaye

Produced by La Belle Kinoise and Screenrunner (Media Development group)

With the support of L'Ambassade de France en République Démocratique du Congo, Fonds Audiovisuel Musical du FCM, SACEM, Procrep-Angoa

With the participation of O.L. Production (Oliver Laffon), Commune Image (Frédéric Robert and Michaël Werner), Canal+, Ciné Cinéma, Dragon Films (Stéphane Lhoest)

Project Co-ordinator Emmanuel Saunier

Post-production Supervisor Olivier Boischoit

Additional Editors Renaud Barret Sébastien Sainte-Croix

Kinshasa Music Supervisor Kibini Kabeya

Soundtrack "Moto Moindo" – Ricky, Coco, Kabosé, guests

(guitars) Makembo Nzale, Vincent Kenis; "Polio" – Ricky; "Je t'aime"; "Tonkara"; "Staff Benda Bilili" – Ricky, Coco, Kabosé; "Sala Keba"; "Moziki"; "Marguerite"; "Souci" – Coco; "Avramandole" – Djunana, Coco; "Kuluna" – Coco, Roger; "Aparjo Kwetu"; "Mama Africa" – Ricky, Coco

Sound Renaud Barret Florent de la Tullaye Samuel Mittelman

Sound Editor/Mixer Mikael Barre

WITH

Léon Likabu "Papa Ricky"

Coco Ngambali Yakala

Theo "Coude"

Nsituvuidi

Makembo Nzale

Zadis Mbulu Nzungu

Djunana Tanga-Suele

Waroma "Santu Papa"

Abi Ngoma

Kibini Kabeya

Roger Landu

Kabanba Kabose

Kasungu

Paulin "Cavalier" Kiara-Maigi

Claude Kinunu

Montana

Maria Barli Djongo

Dieu-Merci Yakala

Dominique Tanga-Suele

Maw Mafuta Likabu

Justin Likabu

Michel Likabu

Belle Likabu

Moïse Likabu

Ernestine Landu

Randi "Mbunda" Boy

V12

Erik Fostinelli

Vincent Kenis

narrator Renaud Barret

Dolby Digital In Colour [L85:1] Subtitles

Distributor Trinity Filmed Entertainment

7783 ft +10 frames

Big Mommas Like Father, like Son

USA 2011

Director: John Whitesell

With Martin Lawrence,

Brandon T. Jackson, Jessica Lucas

Certificate PG 107m 12s

"Sister, are you a brother?" So asks security guard Kurtis Kool (Faizon Love) when he begins to realise that the ample object of his affections may not be all that 'she' seems. And while Kurtis's next words – "Oh no, not again!" – may comprise the film's funniest line, and the closest it ever gets to a 'nobody's perfect' moment, they also capture precisely what many viewers will feel about this thankless sequel.

Just as *Alien* (1979) gave rise to *Aliens* (1986) and *Predator* (1987) led ultimately to *Predators* (2010), it seemed inevitable that the *Big Momma* franchise would eventually spawn its own plural brood of monstrosities, and so, in *Big Mommas Like Father, like Son*, we get not one but two unfunny men in drag, as Martin Lawrence's FBI agent Malcolm passes down the wig, makeup and fat suit to his teenage stepson Trent (Brandon T. Jackson).

On the run from murderous Russians, they take refuge in the Georgia Girls' School for the Arts, where a macguffin in the guise of an incriminating USB drive is hidden. Yet as in the previous *Big Momma's House* (2000) and *Big Momma's House 2* (2006) – the latter directed like this film by TV veteran John Whitesell – here undercover police work takes a backseat to cross-dressing chaos. Still, it would be entirely inappropriate to compare this to such classic drag comedies as *Some Like It Hot* (1959), *Tootsie* (1982) and *Victor Victoria* (1982), or even to more middling fare like *Mrs. Doubtfire* (1993). For the only real analogues to *Big Mommas Like Father, like Son* are the other two *Big Momma* films, which share its rigorously unsophisticated and largely mirthless brand of humour. If you do not find endless amusement in the spectacle of black men making idiots of themselves while dressed as voluminous women, there is little else to make you laugh here. Non-fans of the franchise should not expect to be converted, and would be well advised to give this film a wide berth.

Not that *Big Mommas* doesn't try to broaden its audience. There is a new focus on the intergenerational frictions between Malcolm and Trent, not to mention a welter of *Fame*-style song-and-dance numbers, all evidently calculated to lure the teen dollar – while similar prominence is given to Trent's (sort of) voguish aspirations to be a professional rapper. The music, however, is forgettable, and the characters too broadly drawn for their various relationship dramas to be taken seriously. Told by Malcolm that he should attend university for four years, Trent objects: "D'you know

SYNOPSIS Atlanta, Georgia, the present. FBI agent Malcolm Turner is overjoyed when his stepson Trent is offered a place at his alma mater, Duke University. Trent, however, would rather pursue a career in hip hop. Desperate to get his stepfather's signature on a music contract, the teenager tails Malcolm to a sting operation and inadvertently witnesses the murder of Malcolm's informant Canetti – though not before Canetti has revealed that an incriminating flash drive is hidden in a music box at the Georgia Girls' School for the Arts. With Russian gangster Chirkoff and his two henchmen keen to silence Malcolm and Trent permanently, father and son disguise themselves as Big Momma and her great-niece Charmaine, and go undercover at the school as house mother and new student.

As they search for the flash drive, Malcolm has to fend off the attentions of Kurtis, a security guard with a predilection for large women, while Trent finds himself getting close to fellow musician Haley. 'Charmaine' sets up a date between Haley and her 'cousin'; an undisguised Trent meets Haley off campus, attracting the attention of Chirkoff's men. As Charmaine, Trent performs a duet with Haley at the school's talent show, but he accidentally drops his falsetto; a horrified Haley unmasks him in front of Chirkoff. With Kurtis's help, Malcolm and Trent overpower the Russians and retrieve the flash drive.

Malcolm agrees to sign Trent's music contract, but Trent opts for university instead.

how long that is in hip-hop years?" Shorter, no doubt, than 107 minutes seem in *Big Mommas* time. It's a drag, all right. ♦♦ Anton Bitel

CREDITS

Directed by

John Whitesell

Produced by

David T. Friendly
Michael Green

Screenplay

Matthew Fogel

Story

Don Rhymur
Matthew Fogel

Based on the characters created by Darryl Quarles

Director of Photography

Anthony B. Richmond

Film Editor

Priscilla Nedd Friendly

Production Designer

Meghan C. Rogers

Music

David Newman

Production Supervisor

Damiana Kamishin

2nd Unit Supervisor

Paul Davis

Production Supervisor

Damiana Kamishin

2nd Unit Supervisor

Paul Davis

Production Supervisor

Damiana Kamishin

2nd Unit Supervisor

Paul Davis

Production Supervisor

Damiana Kamishin

2nd Unit Supervisor

Paul Davis

Production Supervisor

Damiana Kamishin

2nd Unit Supervisor

Paul Davis

Production Supervisor

Damiana Kamishin

2nd Unit Supervisor

Paul Davis

Production Supervisor

Damiana Kamishin

2nd Unit Supervisor

Paul Davis

Production Supervisor

Damiana Kamishin

2nd Unit Supervisor

Paul Davis

Production Supervisor

Damiana Kamishin

2nd Unit Supervisor

Paul Davis

Production Supervisor

Damiana Kamishin

2nd Unit Supervisor

Paul Davis

Production Accountant

Matthew K. Grigsby

Location Manager

Laura Bryant

2nd Unit Director

Jeffrey J. Dashnaw

Assistant Directors

1st: William Paul Clark

2nd: Juana Franklin

2nd Unit

1st: James Giovannetti Jr

1st: Todd Turner

2nd: Scott M. Bryant

2nd Unit

Script Supervisors

Gail Hunter

2nd Unit:

Amy Blanc Lacy

Deb Walters

Casting

Kim Taylor-Coleman

Alexa L. Fogel

Atlanta:

Lisa Mae Fincannon

Craig Fincannon

Mark Fincannon

Additional Footage by

Herb Kossover

2nd Unit Director of Photography

Mark Vargo

Camera Operators

A: Jeff Greeley

2nd Unit

Greg Baldi

B Camera/Steadicam Operators

Jody Miller

Rick Drapkin

Gaffer

Russ Engles

Key Grips

Art Bartels

2nd Unit:

Robert Kempf

Visual Effects

Soho VFX

Special Effects

Co-ordinator

Bob Shelley

Art Director

Mark E. Garner

Senior Set Designer

Cameron Beasley

Set Designer

Doug Fick

Set Decorator

Frank Galline

Property Masters

Tracy Farrington

2nd Unit:

William Butler

Construction

Co-ordinator

Thomas A. Morris Jr

Costume Designer

Leah Katznelson

Costume Supervisor

Scott E. O'Leary

Department Head

Make-up Artist



Moms on the run: Martin Lawrence

SYNOPSIS A documentary following Staff Benda Bilili, a group of mostly paraplegic musicians living on the streets of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Beginning in 2004, the film charts the group's struggle to rehearse, record and perform, culminating in the release of their first album and a successful tour of Europe in 2009.

Beverly Jo Pryor
Key Make-up Artist
 John R. Bayless
Make-up Effects
Produced by
 Spectral Motion, Inc.
Department Head Hair
Stylist
 Camille Friend
Key Hair Stylist
 Andrea Young
Main/End Titles
Design
 Picture Mill
Additional Music/
Songs by
 Ali Theodore
Orchestrations
 Daniel Hamuy
Music Supervisors
 Dave Jordan
 Jojo Villanueva
Soundtrack
 "On the Grind"; "My
 Shorty's Hot" – RAE
 featuring Classic; "Silk
 Road – Zen Mix";
 "Armadillo Shuffle";
 "Lyrical Miracle" –
 Brandon T. Jackson; "I
 Need You the Most" –
 Hiram Bronkstein;
 "Swing Low, Sweet
 Chariot"; "I Don't Think
 So" – Kelis; "Ain't
 Nobody"; "Baby You
 Know" – Jessica Lucas;
 Brandon T. Jackson;
 "Wild Thing" – Tone Loc;
 "Mama Said Knock You
 Out"; "What They Talkin'
 Bout" – RAE;
 "Tambourine" – Eve;
 "Plie 2/4" – Aly Tejas;
 "Maniac" – Michael
 Sembello; "Do tha Copy
 Kat" – Classic; "String
 Suite Giga" – Daniele
 Luppi; "Jungle Flames"
 – The DNC;
 "Temperature Rising" –
 Dre Mason, D.R.W. (Da
 Realist Written); "Papa
 Was a Rollin' Stone" –
 The Temptations; "The
 Way It Is" – Robbie
 Wyckoff; "I Can Change"
 – Jack Miz; "You Sexy
 Thing" – Hot Chocolate;
 "Give It to Me Baby" –
 Rick James; "Big Beat
 Classic" – The
 Deekompressors
Choreographer
 Jamal Sims
Sound Mixer
 Whit Norris
Re-recording Mixers
 Kevin O'Connell
 Beau Borders
Supervising Sound
Editor
 Kelly Oxford
Stunt Co-ordinator
 Lonnie R. Smith Jr
Patrick the Rooster
Trainer
 Atlanta Dogworks

CAST

Martin Lawrence
 Malcolm Turner, 'Big
 Momma'
Brandon T. Jackson
 Trent, 'Charmaine'
Jessica Lucas
 Haley
Portia Doubleday
 Jasmine
Tony Curran
 Chirkoff
Ana Ortiz
 Gail
Sherri Shepherd
 Beverly Townsend
Michelle Ang
 Mia
Emily Rios
 Isabelle
Henri Lubatti
 Vlad
Lorenzo Pisoni
 Dmitri
Max Casella
 Canetti

Marc John Jefferies
 Rembrandt
Brandon Gill
 Scratch
Zack Mines
 Delante
Trey Lindsey
 TJ
Ken Jeong
 mailman
Susan Walters
 mall mother
Susan Griffiths
 cafeteria girl 1
Brianne Gould
 cafeteria girl 2
Dawntavia Bullard
 cafeteria girl – another
 girl
Mari Morrow
 Ms Mercier
Susie Spear
 art teacher
Lily Chambers
 drama queen
Jasmine Burke
 drama queen 2
Juliet Kim
 quad student
Brian LaFontaine
 Crawford
Ramsey Luke
 FBI agent
Jazmia Battle
 diva 1
Christiani Pitts
 diva 2
Bianca Brewton
Christina Chandler
Elysandra Quiñones
Kenitia Coleman
Allison Forslund
Christina Glur
Whitney Leigh Brown
Ashlee Nino
Candace Maxwell
Madison Benson
Carson Seeley
Laura Edwards
Monica Wilson
 dancers

[Uncredited]
Faizon Love
 Kurtis Kool

Dolby Digital/DTS
In Colour
 [2.35:1]

Distributor
 20th Century Fox
 International (UK)

9,647 ft +7 frames



Encounters at the beginning of the world: Werner Herzog

Cave of Forgotten Dreams

Director: Werner Herzog

There has always been a 'Guinness Book of Records' side to Werner Herzog, coexisting with his supposed visionary tendencies. It was there from early in his career (his 1974 decision to walk from Munich to Paris to visit the ailing Lotte Eisner) and it probably peaked in his demand that his cast and crew should in real life haul a large boat across a densely wooded hill in the Amazon jungle for *Fitzcarraldo*. Thanks to an ongoing collaboration with producer Erik Nelson, Herzog's impulse to set precedents and break records has settled into a new niche in the genre of the National Geographic/Discovery Channel documentary, which thrives on promises to provide pellucid, Hi-Def images of places and things that have never been shown before. The genre's eclecticism suits Herzog's interests in both primitivism (the man who thought he could be the buddy of grizzly bears) and unknowable mysteries (the as-yet-inexplicable existence of the sub-atomic neutrino), not to mention his cinephilic compulsion to speculate what everyone else is dreaming (he long claimed that he didn't dream himself). The closed world of a Paleolithic 'cave of forgotten

dreams' in southern France gives Herzog the ideal arena to explore all his impulses. Better yet, it forces him to curb his grumpy-old-man complaints about the modern world. None of that stuff about "the abomination of yoga classes" here, just a wry reference to *Baywatch*.

The Chauvet Cave, named after the man who accidentally discovered it in 1994, boasts a miraculously preserved array of rock paintings from the Paleolithic era, all depicting animals except for one fertility-goddess representation of a human female. Learning from the disaster of the Lascaux Caves, where the rock paintings have deteriorated after exposure to the humid breath of thousands of visitors, the French government has closed off this cave (it was naturally sealed for millennia by a rockfall) and allows researchers to access its treasures only for two short periods each year. Narrow metal walkways have somehow been installed across the space to prevent any further disturbance of the cave floor. Herzog persuaded the authorities to let him in alongside the researchers in the spring of 2010; he filmed the cave interior with a minimal crew, using cold lights, and interviewed specialists from various fields of study in their base camp and in the surrounding countryside. More surprisingly he filmed in 3D, to show how the prehistoric painters had exploited the natural contours of the rockfaces.

SYNOPSIS March-April 2010. Werner Herzog and a skeleton crew of three join a group of archaeologists, paleontologists and other specialists during their annual exploration of the usually sealed Chauvet Cave in southern France, home to a spectacularly well-preserved array of rock paintings from 32,000 years ago. Jean Clottes and Dominique Baffier, former and current directors of the French government's Chauvet Cave Research Project, explain the formation of the cave system and the reason it has become a kind of time capsule from the Paleolithic era. Other experts offer speculations about the function of the cave (which was never inhabited), the working methods and identities of the artists, and the lives of the people who used the cave.

In a brief coda, Herzog visits the nearby synthetic 'tropical zone' created with warmed water from the nuclear power plant on the Rhône, noting that the crocodiles bred there have all produced albino offspring.

Like most Herzog documentaries, the result is rather wonderful as a spectacle and rather frustrating as an enquiry. The film obviously justifies its existence by making available some prehistoric art which very few people will ever have the chance to inspect at first hand. Peter Zeitlinger's typically resourceful photography shows off the rock paintings in as much detail as circumstances permit, and his images prove consistently more fascinating than Herzog's voiceover comments, here pointing out a resemblance to Picasso's Minotaur, there wondering if the cave artists cried and dreamed. The interviews follow the usual Herzog arc from factual to eccentric: once the basic scientific data is established, we move on to clumsy demonstrations of what Paleolithic spear-throwing might have been like and batty speculations about the ancient scent-environment.

The film ends with an irrelevant postscript (padding?) showing some albino crocodiles. But the only serious complaints concern two tropes which are fast becoming Herzog clichés. First, the insertion of an unilluminating film clip. Here it's Fred Astaire tap-dancing with three giant silhouettes of himself in the climactic nightclub scene from *Swing Time*, ostensibly to illustrate how those who used the cave might have seen the paintings appear to 'dance' by firelight. (The clip curiously goes unacknowledged in the closing credits, as did the equally fatuous Lone Ranger clip in the credits for *Encounters at the End of the World*.) Second, the use of cod-religious choral music. Here Ernst Reijseger's eclectic score, which also includes orchestral and electronic noises, resorts to chorales to pump up Herzog's sense that the cave is somehow mystical and sacred. The score for *Encounters*, by other hands, did much the same thing for the Antarctic. The religious inferences are jarring. Where are Popol Vuh when we need them?

♥♦ Tony Rayns

Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the May issue.

Chalet Girl

United Kingdom/
Germany/Austria 2010

Director: Phil Trill

With Felicity Jones, Ed Westwick,
Tamsin Egerton, Bill Nighy
Certificate 12A 96m 38s

When the final credits roll on *Chalet Girl* it's something of a surprise to discover that this isn't a Working Title production. After all, the requisite elements are all here: a star-crossed romance between a scruffy Brit and a sophisticated Statesider; chocolate-box scenery; a nauseating helping of saccharine sentiment; and a conciliatory ending to warm the cockles. The producers have even thrown Billy Nighy in for good measure.

The hapless Brit in question here is 19-year-old former skateboarder Kim Matthews, who since the death of her mother has lost her confidence and been reduced to frying chicken in a North London takeaway to cover the bills for the cramped flat she shares with her befuddled father. When a series of convenient circumstances sees Kim transplanted to the sparkling white slopes of an Austrian ski resort to work as a chalet girl for a wealthy American family, the stage is set for a triumph-against-the-odds trajectory, as Kim struggles to adjust to this world of affluence and extravagance before finding her feet on the slopes and regaining her self-esteem – not to mention a sizeable cash figure and the love of a good (rich) man.

Social realism, then, this is not. Unlike, say, John Stockwell's 2002 *Blue Crush*, which saw Kate Boswell's working-class surfer chick similarly facing her fears and living her dreams, and which also combined tournament movie with rom-com (with the love interest yet another white-collar smoothie), *Chalet Girl* gives little account of the grim realities of everyday life for which such low-outlay

activities as skating and surfing can provide a much needed escape. Nor is there any real focus on the countercultural aspects of the sport: perhaps a consequence of the fact that snowboarding, unlike the other two, is far from a cheap thrill. More problematic is the casting of Oxbridge grad and costume-drama stalwart Felicity Jones in the lead. She's likeable enough but hardly convinces as a feisty North London girl, leaving the central contrast between Kim and her upper-crust counterparts (spearheaded by a frighteningly authentic Tamsin Egerton as Queen Sloane) rather underwhelming.

To be fair, the film's nothing if not honest about its feelgood aspirations, and it's pretty successful in this respect, not least in conveying the air-punching exhilaration of its snowboarding showboaters. The more serious point though is that everything about *Chalet Girl* – it's posh-chav heroine, it's focus on a cripplingly expensive sport, the house-porn of the central location, the aspirational, individualist credo – confirms that this is a film resolutely targeted at middle-class audiences. It's the kind of movie that gaggles of friends will watch to get them in the mood for next week's trip to Val d'Isère, much as competitive rowers settle down with *True Blue* before a race. And if that smacks of reverse snobbery, the spectators concerned are unlikely to care: as Egerton's game performance suggests, it's easy to laugh at yourself when you're having this much fun.

◆◆ Catherine Wheatley

CREDITS

Directed by
Phil Trill
Produced by
Pippa Cross
Harriet Rees
Dietmar Günsche
Wolfgang Behr
Screenplay
Tom Williams
Director of Photography
Ed Wild
Editor
Robin Sales

Production Designer
Benedikt Herforth
Original Music
Christian Henson

©Chalet Girl Films
Distribution Ltd, Neue
Bioskop Film
Produktions & Vertriebs
GmbH, Novotny &
Novotny Filmproduktion
GmbH, UK Film Council
Production Companies
UK Film Council in

SYNOPSIS London, the present. Nineteen-year-old Kim Matthews has retired from competitive skateboarding following the death of her mother in a car accident. She lives with her feckless father and works at a fast-food joint to pay the bills. After signing up with a silver-service company, she is offered a contract as a chalet girl in Austria – a job that will help clear the family debts.

Assigned to the luxury residence of businessman Richard Madsen, Kim spends her days cooking and cleaning for his pampered family. She finds it hard to grasp the rules of this rarefied world and gets little help from her upper-crust co-worker Georgie.

Kim meets affable snowboarder Mikki, who introduces her to the sport and its cool cohort, including reigning pro champ Jules. Kim proves a natural at the sport and with Mikki's encouragement decides to enter the resort's biggest pro-boarding event of the season. Kim trains with Richard's son Jonny, and the pair fall in love – much to the chagrin of Jonny's mother and his spoilt girlfriend Chloe. When Jonny and Chloe's engagement is announced, Kim is heartbroken.

The day of the competition arrives, and Kim only qualifies as a reserve. But when Jules is injured, Kim is able to compete and win the £25,000 prize. She and Jonny – who has broken off his engagement – are reconciled.

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Metropolis International
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Bayern, DFFF –
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Filmförderfonds, BKM,
Österreichisches
Filminstitut, Cine Tirol,
Filmfonds Wien present
a CrossDay,
Kaleidoscope Films,
Neue Bioskop Film
production in co-
production with
Novotny & Novotny
Filmproduktion
A film by Phil Trill
In association with Altus
Productions 2 Limited,
EOS Pictures LLP,
Prescience Media 4 LLP,
Prescience Media 5 LLP,
Prescience Media 6 LLP,
Prescience Media 2 LLP,
Omni Films 3 LLP
Enabled by Screen
South, RIFE Lottery
Funding Programme
Made through The UK
Film Council's Premiere
Fund

Executive Producers
Tim Smith
Paul Brett
James Swarbrick
Anthony Day
Ralph Kamp
Phil Hope
Reno Antoniadis
Dan Shepherd
Co-producers
Franz Novotny
Alexander O'Neal
Line Producers
Oliver Lör
Philip Everkamp
Alexander Glehr
Unit Production Manager
Marc Grewe
Production Managers
Austria:
Gottlieb Pallendorf
UK Shoot:
Imogen Bell
Production Co-ordinators
Felix Manthey
Vera Weißberger
UK:
Katie Bullock-Webster
UK Shoot:
Livia Burton
Production Controller
Sylvie Nitz
Location Managers
Austria:
Markus Jungreithmayer
Bernhard 'Bezi'
Freinademetz
Germany:
Michael Erhard
UK Shoot:
Richard Godfrey
3
Post-production Co-ordinators
Kitty de la Beche
Aoife Crehan

2nd Unit Director

Jens Hoffman

Assistant Directors

1st: Joe Geary

2nd: Michael Queen

2nd Unit

1st: Andi Lang

UK Shoot

2nd: Tom White

Script Supervisors

Björn Berger

UK Shoot:

San Davey

Casting Director

Dan Hubbard

Skateboard Footage

Ryan Gray

Andrew Evans

Additional Camera

Guido Perrini

Michael Reinecke

Steadicam Operator

Erwin Lanzensberger

Gaffers

Christian Saalfeld

UK Shoot:

Jonathan Yates

Key Grip

Harold 'Fidi' Peter

Additional Editors

Chris Gill

Quin Williams

Colin Sumsion

Art Director

UK Shoot:

Anna Lynch-Robinson

Set Decorator

Johannes Wild

Props Buyers

Martin Reiter

Andreas Sobotka

UK:

Gemma Ryan

UK Shoot:

James Hendy

Construction Manager

Thorsten Huth

Costume Designer

Léonie Hartard

Costume Supervisor

Mo Vorwerck

Make-up Designer

Germaine Mouth

Hair/Make-up Artists

Barbara Spinner

Sam Dopena

Titles

Colin Sumsion

Jim Allen

Music Orchestrators

Ben Foksett

Christian Henson

Music Supervisor

Matt Biffa

Soundtrack

"Bad Company", "No
Regrets" – This Is
Freedom; "Posh Girls" –
Scouting for Girls; "Pack
Up" – Eliza Doolittle;
"Edgar" – Lucky
Elephant; "Upside
Down" – Paloma Faith;
"Tokyo (Vampires &
Wolves)" – The
Wombats; "Disease";
"Go" – Livingston; "Cola
Coke" – Rosie Oddie &
The Odd Squad; "Sky
Surfin'" – Toddla T;
"Wake Up" – Slimy;
"Fader" – The Temper
Trap; "Chicken

Playback" – The Bees;
"Something Good Can
Work"; "Do You Want It
All" – Two Door Cinema
Club; "Who'd Want to
Find Love?" – Ellie
Goulding; "Amazing" –
One eskimo;
"Explosions" – Eli
Paperboy Reed; "Where
We Belong" –
Lostprophets;
"Chequered Love" –
Kim Wilde
Production Sound Mixer
Frank Heidbrink
Sound Mixer
UK Shoot:
Patrick Owen
Re-recording Mixers
Richard Straker
Gareth Bull
Stunt Co-ordinator
Christian Jerabek
Snowboard Consultants
Spencer Clardige
Stuart Brass
SoulSports
T4 Unit
Director/Producer:
Pete Deagle
Production Manager:
Laura Green
Production
Co-ordinator:
Bex Hampson
Scriptwriter:
James Menzies
Camera Supervisor:
Nat Hill
Camera Operator:
Charlie Bryan

Production Sound Mixer

Frank Heidbrink

Sound Mixer

UK Shoot:

Patrick Owen

Re-recording Mixers

Richard Straker

Gareth Bull

Stunt Co-ordinator

Christian Jerabek

Snowboard Consultants

Spencer Clardige

Stuart Brass

SoulSports

T4 Unit

Director/Producer:

Pete Deagle

Production Manager:

Laura Green

Production

Co-ordinator:

Bex Hampson

Scriptwriter:

James Menzies

Camera Supervisor:

Nat Hill

Camera Operator:

Charlie Bryan

CAST

Felicity Jones

Kim Matthews

Ed Westwick

Jonny Madsen

Tamsin Egerton

Georgie

Ken Duken

Mikki

Sophia Bush

Chloe

Nicholas Braun

Nigel

Tara Dakides

Tara Dakides

Adam Bousdoukos

Willy

Gregor Bloéb

Bernhard

Georgia King

Jules

Bill Bailey

Bill

Brooke Shields

Caroline Madsen

Bill Nighy

Richard Madsen

Miquita Oliver

Rick Edwards

T4 presenters

Rebecca Lacey

Thea

Chandra Ruegg

Trace

Tom Goodman-Hill

Les

Angela Curran

interviewer 1

Jessica Hynes

interviewer 2

Charlie Tebbetts

kid

Jo Martin

Lexi

Mario Netzer

yodeller

Beukes Willemse

Livingston lead guitarist

Alex MacQueen

Malcolm

Mike Goodenough

Lawrence

Steve Furst

Charles

Nora Rieser

burger girl

Christian Stevenson

competition compère

Sandra Ruffin

starter

Graham Lee

Lord Marberry

Jasmin Wilson

TV presenter

Patrick Finger

clipboard guy

Amber Atherton

Georgie Marsh

Hattie Hendrick

Daisy Carpenter

Millie Maidens

Helen Duckhouse

Alexandra Carlson

Kaye Alfresco

posh girls

Kjersti Buass

Aline Bock

Tania Detomas

Aimee Fuller

Margot Rozes

Silje Norendal

Roxyriders

Ava Vaughn

2-year-old Kim

Annika Vrkian

7-year-old Kim

Dolby Digital

In Colour

[1.85:1]

Distributor

Momentum Pictures

8,697 ft +6 frames

German/Austrian

theatrical title

Powder Girl



Board silly: Felicity Jones

Client-9 The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer

USA 2010

Director: Alex Gibney

Today, Eliot Spitzer is host of a CNN talk show that has been struggling to attract viewers. Just one of many minor media commentators contributing to the daily babble about politics, he is a figure much diminished from what he was only three years ago when, as governor of New York, he was being talked up as a potential presidential candidate.

Alex Gibney's fascinating film about the lapsed hero works on many different levels. First, it's a study in hubris. Spitzer in his political prime was a formidably arrogant man – a brash, self-righteous alpha male nicknamed 'the sheriff of Wall Street', who delighted in taking on corrupt establishment figures. On camera with Gibney, traces of the arrogance remain. Spitzer likens himself to Icarus and talks about himself in the third person – he isn't especially sympathetic. However, Gibney's documentary makes it clear that he was also genuinely heroic. Brought up by his property developer father with a very sharp sense of right and wrong, he was ready (as New York's attorney general) to tackle white-collar corruption wherever he saw it. He may have been born into privilege but that didn't mean he protected privilege.

Gibney's previous credits include *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room* (2005), an exposé of the disgraced energy company, and *Taxi to the Dark Side* (2007), about the murder of an Afghan cab driver by American soldiers. In *Client-9*, it's clear that his sympathies are with Spitzer. The real scandal the documentary uncovers isn't the politician's sexual misdemeanours (in 2008 the *New York Times* broke the story of Spitzer's association with prostitutes) but the extraordinary lengths his political opponents went to in order to destroy him. The richness of the documentary lies in the fact that these opponents seem perfectly happy to talk at length to Gibney about how much they dislike Spitzer and how keen they were to see him brought down. Wall Street potentates such as Hank Greenberg, the disgraced former boss of AIG, and Ken Langone, former New York Stock Exchange director, can hardly hide their schadenfreude at Spitzer's fall. What they don't disclose is how active they were in bringing about that fall.

The film has all the ingredients of a TV crime movie – sex, money, power and even an undercurrent of comedy. The Emperors Club VIP, the escort agency Spitzer so recklessly used, had English aristocrats as well as American politicians among its clientele. Cecil Suwal, the youthful madam who helped run the operation, is a wry interviewee with a sense of the absurdity both of her profession and of the law-makers who were so keen to close the business down – she's like a younger, American version

of Cynthia Payne. There is something comic too in the rapid way Ashley Dupré (one of the call girls Spitzer visited) sought to build a media career on the back of her notoriety. Tiny details – such as the fact that 'Client 9', as Spitzer was known, allegedly wore calf-length black socks during the sex act – add to the farcical side of the story.

Gibney isn't above a little prurience and voyeurism. He highlights the contrast between the way the media depicted Spitzer before his fall as a crusading hero and his ridicule by the tabloids after his exposure. There are sultry renditions of 'New York, New York' and 'interviews' with one of the call girls (whose words are spoken by an actress, made up to look like Veronica Lake in an old *film noir*). Nonetheless, as in his other documentaries, the director is also making important points about corruption and the debasement of political life in the US. He doesn't hide the fact that Spitzer brought his misfortunes on his own head – Spitzer himself acknowledges as much. Spitzer's record as governor was mixed and his abrasive style alienated many, so his career may have gone off the rails anyway, even without the prostitution scandal. However, his Republican and Wall Street opponents were ready to fight very dirty indeed to bring him down.

It would be stretching it to think that Spitzer might have been able to counter the financial crisis that overcame Wall Street in 2008 had he remained governor. What *Client-9* makes clear, though, is that he was one of the few figures in the political mainstream ready to tackle white-collar crime and fraud. That, it is inferred, as much as his liaisons with prostitutes, was why he was sidelined.

♦♦ Geoffrey Macnab

CREDITS

Directed by

Alex Gibney

Produced by

Alex Gibney

Jedd Wider

Todd Wider

Producer

Maliken Baird

Written by

Alex Gibney

Director of Photography

Manyse Alberti

Edited by

Plummy Tucker

Original Score

Peter Nashel

©ES Productions LLC

Production Companies

Magnolia Pictures and

A&E IndieFilms present

in association with

Wider Film Projects and

Jigsaw Productions a

film written and directed

by Alex Gibney

A presentation of A&E

IndieFilms

Executive Producers

Molly Thompson

Robert DeBetto

Robert Sharenow

Mason Speed Sexton

Co-producers

Peter Elkind

Sam Black

UK:

David Boardman

Production Accountant

Barbara Karen

Post-production Supervisor

Samara Levenstein

Research

Melissa Gomez

William O'Marra

Co-ordinator:

Doris Burke

Additional Cinematography

Erin Barnett

Ben Bloodwell

Manusz Cichon

Kate Elson

Melissa Gomez

Stephen Kazmierski

Simon Kossoff

George Lyon

Alex Margineau

William O'Marra

William Strube

Antonio Rossi

Gaffer

Ryan Bronz

Co-editor

Alison Amron

Hair/Make-up

Paul Podlucky

Main Titles/Design

Bigstar

Additional Music

M.E. Manning

Orchestrated by

Peter Nashel

Andy Farber

Cameron Greider

Music Supervisor

John McCullough

Soundtrack

"New York New York";

"Sea of Love" – Cat

Power; "Chick a Boom

Boom Boom"; "Right

Now" – Mocean

Worker; "Just Another

Sucker on the Vine" –

Tom Waits; "Before the

Money Came (Battle of

Bettye Lavette)" –

Bettye Lavette; "Love for

Sale" – Caetano Veloso;

"Sex 4 Suga" –

Common; "Golden

Treasure"; "All the Pretty

Girls Go to the City" –

Spoon; "Everybody Got

Their Somethin'" –

Nikka Costa; "I Take

What I Want" – Sam &

Dave; "If I Ruled the

World" – Kurtis Blow;

"Secret Heart" – Feist;

"All Alone" – Gorillaz;

"Fever" – Little Willie

John; "Higher Power

(New York

Reanimation)" – Pete

Miser; Maya Azucena,

contains "New York

New York"

Location Sound

David Hocs

Stéphane Barsalou

Daniel Brooks

Peter Eason

Matthew Geldof

Michael Jones

John Zecca

Re-recording Mixer

Tony Volante

Supervising Sound Editor

Allan Zaleski

Film Extracts

Seabiscuit (2003)

The Core (2003)

WITH

Eliot Spitzer

interviewee

Huibert Waldroup

painter

Lloyd Constantine

former Spitzer adviser

Peter Elkind

author of *Rough Justice*;

The Rise and Fall of Eliot

Spitzer

Darren Dopp

communications

director to Attorney

General Spitzer

Zana Brazdek

formerly of Emperors

Club VIP

'Natalia'

former escort

David Brown

former staff lawyer to

Attorney General

Spitzer

Noreen Harrington

former executive, Stern

Asset Management

'Angelina'

escort, co-worker of

Ashley Dupre at

Emperors Club VIP

Ken Langone

chairman & CEO of

Invermed Associates

Maurice 'Hank'

Greenberg

former chairman & CEO

of AIG

Richard Beattie

legal counsel to the

independent directors

of AIG

John Whitehead

former chairman,

Goldman Sachs

Cecil Suwal

former CEO of

Emperors Club VIP

Jimmy Siegel

media consultant

Kristian Stiles

national finance director

to Eliot Spitzer

Fred Dicker

New York Post state

editor

Joe Bruno

NY Senate majority

leader 1994-2008

Mike Balboni

Deputy Secretary for

Public Safety to

Governor Spitzer

Wayne Barrett

senior editor, *The Village*

Voice

Roger Stone

political consultant

Scott Horton

professor, Columbia

Law School

Karen Finley

performance artist

Wrenn Schmidt

'Angelina'

Laura Somma

woman on the train

Kim Allen

Time Square lip-sync

singer

Dolby Digital

In Colour

[L85:1]

Distributor

Dogwoof Pictures

The Company Men

Director: John Wells

With Ben Affleck, Chris Cooper, Kevin Costner, Tommy Lee Jones

Certificate 15 104m 27s

When Hollywood gets 'serious', the volatile cocktail of hard-charging wit and intelligence mixed with the industry's spectacular ignorance of the real world can be poisonous, as it is in John Wells's earnest, sensitive, polished showcase movie, a brow-furrowed portrait of America besieged by the Economic Downturn. The benightedness at work here doesn't emanate from the specific American reality depicted, which is detailed and expertly observed, but from Wells's concept of the American viewer for whom he made the film. One single per cent of Americans possess more than one-third of American wealth, and less than three per cent of households earn more than \$200,000 a year, and yet this sliver of the country's population seems to be the film's sole target demographic. Either that, or the filmmakers anticipated a broad-base sympathy for unemployed workers regardless of how large their mansions are or how many Porsches they own. In any case, a practical disconnect is in play, leaving the average audience member wondering if Hollywood really is its own planet.

For here we have a star-packed drama in which the three ultra-white-collar protagonists – Ben Affleck's fourth-gear sales exec, Chris Cooper's ageing manager and Tommy Lee Jones's outmoded company founder – are all downsized out of a shipbuilding corporation in Massachusetts. Generally the action is played out with a brooding, apocalyptic hush, as Affleck and absurdly sunny wife Rosemarie DeWitt contemplate having to move from their outsized McMansion to a house actually befitting a family of four, as Cooper faces early retirement and as Jones faces... what to do with the millions he's acquired. It's more complicated than that, of course, and Wells knows how to spike the anxiety, torturing Affleck's movie-star confidence with humiliating job interviews and, please God no, day work with a tool belt for the character's carpenter brother-in-law (Kevin Costner), the movie's sole blue-collar voice (who is nonetheless successful enough to take unprofitable restoration work so that his men will keep drawing salaries). Wells also happily nudges Cooper's depressive 60-year-old into a life corner he can't possibly escape, and this thread of the film has hints of real 70s-style danger to it; if only *The Company Men* had been a gritty character study of this one man, spread too thin and of use to no one, while his younger and richer co-workers make their chagrined way in the new economy.

Everyone's a pro here, and there are consolation prizes (mostly, the schadenfreude take-down of Affleck's alpha dog). But *The Company Men* is not

SYNOPSIS A documentary chronicling the rise and fall of former New York governor Eliot Spitzer. As the city's attorney general before he stood for governor, Spitzer prosecuted some of America's largest financial institutions and some of its most powerful executives. After his election as governor he was one of the most popular politicians in the country. Then the *New York Times* revealed that he had been seeing prostitutes – he was 'Client 9'. In the wake of the exposé he was forced to resign in early 2008. As the documentary reveals, his political enemies appear to have been behind his fall from grace, devoting huge amounts of money and time to catching him out.

After Spitzer's resignation, Wall Street (which he had policed so zealously) hit a period of huge economic turbulence and scandal.



Tommy Lee Jones, Ben Affleck

a satire, as many rich-men-face-reality movies have been before it, nor is it a social critique, no matter how cuddly-middle-class the scenario strains to become in the third act when, in a twist that should appal the long-term American unemployed, being out of work is seen as a healthy way to make the family closer. "In America," the poster tagline reads, "we give our lives to our jobs. It's time to take them back." It's hard to imagine what kind of movie could support that thematic idea, because Wells's film doesn't. Somewhere in the film is the old Hollywood notion that business should be about principles, not profit; Jones delivers a speech to his usurping ex-partner (Craig T. Nelson) about a bygone era, "before we got lost in paperwork and cost reports", to which one New York critic replied, were there unicorns then too? But the vast bulk of the film dares only to seduce our anxious sympathies for near-millionaires who now may have to live in realistically sized homes and perhaps work at jobs that require effort, modesty and skill. If our recession is likened to the Depression in scale, which it habitually is in American media, consider the Depression-era film-of-the-moment that comes to mind – back then, we got *The Grapes of Wrath*. Times have changed.

❖ Michael Atkinson

Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the May issue.

SYNOPSIS New England, the present. A shipbuilding firm begins downsizing, laying off first hot-shot sales executive Bobby Walker and then others, including the ageing Phil Woodward and eventually the company's co-founder Gene McClary. Their privileged lives are badly affected: Bobby attends interviews and goes to job-hunting therapy; Phil spends his days drunk in bars, not telling his family about his situation; Gene leaves home, wandering the area and reprimanding his old partner, who now runs the corporation, for prioritising profit over employee loyalty. Bobby takes temporary carpentry work with his irascible brother-in-law, and spends more time with his kids. Facing a future with no prospects, Phil kills himself; Gene starts a new shipbuilding company.

Country Strong

USA 2010

Director: Shana Feste

With Gwyneth Paltrow, Tim McGraw, Garrett Hedlund, Leighton Meester

Certificate 12A 116m 57s

The corners of this straight-ahead melodrama's love rectangle are briskly drawn out by writer/director Shana Feste (*The Greatest*). There's Gwyneth Paltrow's founded diva Kelly Canter; Tim McGraw's husband-manager James, smothering every affectionate impulse; Garrett Hedlund's sensitive 'jes folks' stud Beau; and Leighton Meester's former Miss Dallas, Chiles Stanton, who thinks being called "a country Barbie" a high compliment.

On a three-city Texas tour, these characters cycle through a succession of dressing rooms, press junkets, hotel suites and recording studios. The movie repeats multiple variations on the following scene: one couple combines, a third party walks in, someone stomps out. Not the most complex square-dance steps, but they keep the cast circulating and allow each their moment of screen time.

Likely given the greenlight after *Crazy Heart* proved that the honky-tonk movie had an audience yet, *Country Strong* has a radio-ready soundtrack curated by Feste and Randall Poster, with the leads singing their own parts – the counterintuitive exception is certifiable music star McGraw, unheard from until the closing credits. Paltrow belts out the climactic title tune, but Hedlund, a game bass-baritone, gets the biggest workload.

The most affecting scenes in *Country Strong* sublimate passion and filter relationships through song, sometimes quite resourcefully. Kelly and Beau are introduced in her rehab suite, working out lyrics together; later, Kelly improvises a tune for a sick child she's visiting on a PR chore, and the viewer, watching her through her husband's eyes, sees a glimpse of her better self. Beau and Chiles' courtship likewise develops through co-writing and duet – performing their song 'Give in to Me', they are playful and receptive, nibbling into each other's lines.

One of the ongoing narratives of country music is the ambiguous demarcation between Nashville-industrial 'country-politan' production and homespun 'outlaw' authenticity. This becomes an opposites-attract push-pull in *Country Strong* when Beau, billed by critics (inaccurately) as "the next Townes Van Zandt", flirts with Chiles, "the next Carrie Underwood". This provides a couple of good lines – teaching her the finer points of songwriting, Beau offers, "You can't just fill in a blank with a noun America loves" – but when Chiles makes her final appearance, 'cured' of big hair and big ambitions, it's a sacrifice of character to the anti-fame platitudes

SYNOPSIS The American South, the present. Country-music star Kelly Canter is in rehab, trying to forget a disastrous Dallas show where she drunkenly toppled off the stage and miscarried a five-month pregnancy.

While drying out, Kelly becomes intimate with Beau Hutton, a handsome orderly who also plays the Nashville honky-tonks. This displeases her manager-husband James, who prematurely decides to push Kelly back on the road, headlining a three-city Texas tour ending in Dallas, to exorcise demons. James fills out the bill alongside Chiles Stanton, a former beauty queen who aspires to country stardom.

On the road, tensions become apparent: Kelly and James's marriage is troubled by unspoken resentments; Kelly and Beau carry on their affair behind James's back; and Beau has a deepening flirtation with Chiles. Kelly fumbles the first two dates, binge drinking while backs are turned.

Beau's attentions shift to Chiles; he asks her to abandon her 'country pop' and the limelight. Kelly and James seem on the brink of reconciliation after she pulls herself together and shows a glimmer of her old star charisma while visiting a sick child for a PR appearance. After passing on life lessons to Chiles, Kelly takes the stage in fine form at the Dallas gig. As her seemingly assured comeback is celebrated, Kelly swallows a cocktail of pills backstage and dies.

Beau returns to playing in obscure barrooms. Chiles eventually joins him for an onstage duet.

the movie defaults to when out of its depths. (It should be noted that aside from some second-unit shots, mostly Texas-set *Country Strong* is a Nashville production.)

Fatal fame is likewise the scapegoat in the Canters' crack-up. Kelly's first breakdown, broadcast to an anticipating arena audience over a gigantic TV, gets the gist of Paltrow's exhibitionistic, pathetic role. Kelly's 'drinking thing' is spectacle, her bottomless troubles a shaft into which the script shines little light. McGraw's hangdog, much cuckolded husband has a certain touching dolour, possibly pharmaceutical in origin (spurning his wife's advances, James explains, "I took an Ambien"), but save glancing moments there is as little privileged perspective into this relationship as into Kelly's with the crucifix she prominently wears.

If McGraw had been armed with a microphone, perhaps the movie could have gained something in symmetry; if Kelly had a grounding in social history, perhaps she could better be believed. As it is, anything this woman does is surprising – is it the booze talking, or a screenwriter's contrivance?

❖ Nick Pinkerton

CREDITS

Directed by Shana Feste
Produced by Jenno Topping, Tobey Maguire
Written by Shana Feste
Director of Photography John Bailey
Edited by Carol Littleton, Conor O'Neill
Production Designer David J. Bomba
Music Michael Brook

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Production Companies Screen Gems presents a Material Pictures production
Executive Producer Meredith Zamsky
Associate Producer George Flynn
Unit Production Manager Meredith Zamsky
Concert Tour Production Manager John Zajonc
Production Supervisor Jennifer Blair
Production Co-ordinator Meredith G. Meade
Production Accountant Ryan Whan

Location Manager

Madeline Bell
Assistant Directors 1st: Anthony Little, 2nd: Scott Rorie
2nd Unit 1st: Gary Marcus, 2nd: Zach Hunt
Script Supervisor Rebecca Robertson-Szwaja
Casting Laura Rosenthal, Liz Dean
Camera Operators A: Matt Moriarty, B: Paul Varneur
Chief Lighting Technician Mike Moyer
Key Grip Art Bartels
Art Effects Zoic Studios
Special Effects Supervisors Terry Arthur, Bob Shelley
Art Director John R. Jensen
Set Decorator Ruby Guidara
Property Master Cynthia Wynn
Construction Co-ordinator David Hale
Costume Designer Stacey Battat
Costume Supervisor Stephen K. Randolph
Make-up Department



Going for a song: Gwyneth Paltrow

Head

Sherm Laurence
Key Make-up Artist
 Linda Boykin-Williams
Hair Department Head
 Elizabeth Martelli
Key Hair Stylist
 Chris Clark
Main Titles
 Picture Mill
End Titles
 Scarlet Letters
Music Supervisor
 Randall Poster
Soundtrack
 "Silver Wings"; "Hard out Here"; "Hide Me Babe"; "Turn Loose All the Horses"; "Timing Is Everything"; "Garrett Hedlund"; "Thirsty"; "Hank Williams Jr."; "Hangin' On"; "Jypsi"; "Friends in Low Places"; "Chances Are"; "Give in to Me"; "Garrett Hedlund, Leighton Meester"; "Honky Tonk Blues"; "Hank Williams; "Summer Girl"; "Words I Couldn't Say"; "Coming Home"; "A Little Bit Stronger"; "Leighton Meester; "Boy" - Lee Brice; "Chug-a-Lug" - Roger Miller; "Last Date" - Floyd Cramer; "It Ain't Gotta Be Love" - Brett Eldredge; "She's Actin' Single (I'm Drinkin' Doubles)" - Ronnie Dunn; "Country Strong"; "A Fighter"; "Travis, Can I Have This Dance"; "Shake That Thing"; "Coming Home" - Gwyneth Paltrow; "She's Got You" - Patsy Cline; "Sea of Heartbreak" - Don Gibson; "Kissin' in Cars" - Bekah Hally Band; "Liar's Lie" - Lee Ann Womack; "Take Me Away" - Hayes Carll; "Song of the South" - Alabama; "Keep on Smilin'" - Wet Willie; "Steal You Away" - Matt Flener; "Fly Again" - Nikki Williams; "Love Don't Let Me Down" - Chns Young, Patty Loveless; "Talk Is Cheap" - Chris Stapleton; "Me and Tennessee" - Tim McGraw, Gwyneth Paltrow; "Timing Is Everything" - Trace Adkins
Choreographer
 Wes Veldink
Production Mixer
 Glen Trew
Re-recording Mixers
 Steve Maslow
 Gregg Landaker
 Rick Kline
Supervising Sound Editors
 Kami Asgar
 Sean McCormack
Stunt Co-ordinators
 Ian Quinn
 Jack Gill

CAST

Gwyneth Paltrow
 Kelly Canter
 Tim McGraw
 James Carter
 Garrett Hedlund
 Beau Hutton
 Leighton Meester
 Chiles Stanton
 Marshall Chapman
 Winnie
 Lari White
 hair stylist
 Jeremy Childs
 JJ
 JD Parker
 Joe
 Lisa Stewart Seals
 Travis' mom
 Jackie Welch
 teacher
 Cinda McCain
 Misty
 Gabe Sipos
 Travis

Sandra Harris

orderly
 Megan Henderson
 Megan Henderson
 Dan Beene
 Bob
 Reegus Flenory
 security guard
 Terri Minton
 James' assistant
 Ed Bruce
 Clint
 Darrin Dickerson
 Tex
 Alana Grace
 Ginny
 Katie Groshong
 Richard's assistant
 Candace Michelle
 Coffee
 Denise
 Katie Cook
 gossip show host
 Adam Skaggs
 PA 1
 Travis Nicholson
 PA 2
 Denitia Odgie
 PR girl in classroom
 Jeffrey Buckner Ford
 Richard
 Jeri Sager
 stylist
 Kirt Lahew
 biker
 Ranjit Bhullar
 doctor
 Tina White
 interviewee
 Brett Warren
 Jesse Clark
 Olivia Haley
 Jim Melton
 fans
 Holly Watson
 Brad Schmitt
 Andy Cordan
 interviewers
 Cory Younts
 Skylar Wilson
 Josh Graham
 Chris Scroggs
 Loney Hutchins
 Ian Fitchuk
 Beau's bandmates
 Bucky Baxter
 John Bohlinger
 Neal Casal
 Chris Clark
 Jim Lauderdale
 Doug Frasure
 Amanda Shires
 John Deaderick
 Kelly's bandmates
 Johnny Gates
 Jamie Jarbeau
 Matt Scanlon
 Michael Olin Lotten
 Smith Curry
 Chiles' bandmates
 Kristen Wilkinson
 David Angeli
 Gregory Martin
 Sara Reist
 string quartet members
 James Hamlet
 Steve Hinson
 honky tonk band members
 Fred Eltringham
 Gary Nicholson
 Beau Stapleton
 Danny Flowers
 studio band members
 Nancy Amoms
 Jim Taylor
 Jonathan Martin
 Katrina Hagger Smith
 Nick Beres
 Kelly Sutton
 Shane Tallant
 Katrina Smith
 Christine Maddala
 Stephanie Langston
 reporters

Dolby Digital/DTS/
 SDDS
 In Colour
 Prints by
 DeLuxe
 [2.35:1]
 Distributor
 Sony Pictures Releasing
 10,525 ft +8 frames



Bottom gear: Vince Vaughn, Kevin James

The Dilemma

Director: Ron Howard
With Vince Vaughn, Kevin James, Jennifer Connelly, Winona Ryder
Certificate 12A 111m 31s

Firmly aiming for the 'bromance' genre, Ron Howard's first comedy in over a decade sees Vince Vaughn swapping regular buddy Jon Favreau for the similarly bulky Kevin James. Vaughn plays Ronny, who is tormented by the knowledge that Geneva (Winona Ryder), the wife of his business partner Nick, is having an affair. Unwilling to jeopardise a major contract, Ronny resorts to amateur espionage and general self-torture. The idea is that he is so devoted to his friend Nick that he is driven to mental instability – but their relationship and characters aren't developed enough to make this a credible response.

More interestingly, the premise posits that we know very little about our friends, especially when it comes to their marriages and sex lives. Geneva shows Ronny that his assumptions

about his best friend's relationship are incorrect – but her reward is an increasingly demonised character whose side of the story is completely dropped. Her transformation from caring friend to pursued-lipped, unrepentant infidel only serves to support Ronny's simplistic, borderline misogynistic interpretation of events. By consistently focusing on Ronny's point of view, the script denies an insight into Nick's marriage that could have made the titular dilemma more compelling.

With his distracted manner and amusing non sequiturs, Geneva's lover Zip (a scene-stealing Channing Tatum) is the film's most promising character. But one senses that much of his performance was left on the cutting-room floor – along with numerous plot points about Ronny's planned proposal to his neglected girlfriend Beth (Jennifer Connelly). Instead, *The Dilemma* focuses on a judgemental hero whose frequent rants rarely amuse or enlighten. One looks forward to Howard's next drama.

◆ Anna Smith

Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the May issue.

SYNOPSIS Chicago, the present. Ronny runs an auto design business with Nick, who is married to Geneva. Geneva encourages Ronny to propose to his girlfriend Beth, who helped him through a gambling addiction two years ago. Ronny secretly plans to propose while also successfully pitching a design concept to Chrysler. As Nick works on the new design, Ronny visits a botanical garden where he aims to propose, but he spies Geneva kissing another man, Zip. He tries to tell Ronny but fails; he confronts Geneva, who explains that Nick regularly visits a massage parlour and hasn't slept with her in six months. She vows to end her fling. Ronny follows Nick to the massage parlour and then phones Geneva, who is with Zip. Geneva threatens to tell Nick that she and Ronny slept together in college. Ronny follows Geneva and takes pictures of her with Zip. Zip discovers him, and they fight. Ronny makes an inappropriate speech at Beth's parents' anniversary dinner; Beth is concerned that he's gambling again. When Ronny returns to Zip's to get his camera, Nick secretly follows. Ronny comes home to find that Beth has gathered a group of people together to confront him about his supposed gambling addiction, and Nick has invited Zip, mistaking him for a bookie. Ronny reveals Geneva's affair; Nick is furious. Later, Beth accepts Ronny's proposal. The next day, Nick tells Ronny that he's moved out. He punches Ronny before a key meeting with Chrysler, but they recover and seal the deal. Later, at an ice-hockey game, Nick wins a holiday thanks to a pep talk from Ronny.

Drive Angry

Director: Patrick Lussier
With Nicolas Cage, Amber Heard, William Fichtner, Billy Burke
Certificate 18 104m 12s

A quasi-neo-carsploitation picture with a 3D price tag, *Drive Angry* tries very hard to be unpretentious, derivative, trashy good fun. In its (forged) signature scene, slow-talking, shades-wearing gunslinger John Milton (Nicolas Cage) fends off a gang of villains while simultaneously screwing a waitress, swigging on a bottle of whisky and smoking a fat cigar. Bullets and axes fly towards the camera to a pop soundtrack that would have qualified as incongruous at some point in the dim and distant pre-Tarantino, pre-Rodriguez past. Milton is fully clothed, the waitress very much not; and his punchline is "I never disrobe before a gunfight." Well, who does?

It has the structure of a joke, and it gets a laugh, without being funny; similarly the scene as a whole is the kind that routinely gets described as 'hilariously over the top' or 'deliriously pulpy' at the cost of being actually dangerous or exciting. In fact it's just sleazy – and a follow-up gag has the anonymous woman being assigned a psychotherapist. Of course, one wouldn't want to risk appearing a schoolmarm; but when Clive Owen and Monica Bellucci performed the exact same scene in 2007's *Shoot 'Em Up*, no masterpiece, at least Owen had the courage to bare his arse.

Besides, Milton is already dead and so, as we later learn, bulletproof (or you might say 'death proof'), rather lowering the stakes. He is temporarily among the living because a satanic cult has murdered his daughter and plans to sacrifice his granddaughter in order to bring about hell on earth; the plot alternates between his pursuit of the cult's leader Jonah King (Billy Burke), his own pursuit by one of Satan's minions, the Accountant (William Fichtner), and his gradual release of backstory, in between set pieces, to sidekick Piper (Amber Heard).



Amber Heard, Nicolas Cage

SYNOPSIS The Deep South, the present. John Milton escapes from hell to avenge his daughter, murdered by a Satanist sect led by Jonah King, and rescue his infant granddaughter, whom King intends to sacrifice under the next full moon in order to bring about hell on earth. Milton is pursued by 'the Accountant', sent by Satan to bring him back to his proper place in the underworld. Milton, appearing as a drifter, hitches a ride with feisty waitress Piper, then rescues her from her violent fiancé. The Accountant, posing as a federal agent, deputises two state troopers to bring Milton down; Piper kills them in self-defence, aligning her fate with Milton's. Later, during a motel stop, they fight off a murder attempt by King's goons.

Having repelled the Accountant with a special weapon stolen from hell, Milton and Piper track down King to a Satanist church. Milton is shot in the eye and apparently killed, and Piper is abducted. Milton, being dead already, recovers, and rescues Piper after a car chase. An old friend provides a new car after King damages Piper's. The Accountant, who wants Milton for himself, stymies the police's capture attempts; but when the two finally meet at the derelict prison where King intends to perform the sacrifice, the Accountant, who is contemptuous of the Satanists, allows Milton to rescue his granddaughter and kill King. After a climactic battle, Piper is given the baby to look after and Milton and the Accountant return to hell.

Burke leaves next to no impression as a bad guy, failing to make menacing even the fact that he carries Milton's daughter's thighbone around with him. Fichtner, usually good value in his myriad small roles (*The West Wing*, *Go*, the 'empty telephone' in *Heat*), does better, and indeed the film's best joke is the contempt in which Satan's representative on earth holds the self-proclaimed Satanists. Amber Heard, introduced as a pair of legs, is a victim of the film's bet-hedging relationship with exploitation cinema, but unlike Cage seems to have put in the hours for the fight scenes.

Well past the point of self-aware self-parody, Cage is in danger of becoming terminal YouTube compilation fodder; while there's no big freakout, his very first scene includes a 'cool guys don't look at explosions' shot, an action cliché that one might have thought ridiculed into retirement. More fundamentally, for a film called *Drive Angry*, there's no really meaty car chase – the longest is a tame affair involving a camper-van – and while gratuitous 3D, in the circumstances, is at least preferable to restrained 3D, as so often little is given in return for the murkiness, discomfort and money.

♥ Henry K. Miller

Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the May issue.

The Eagle

USA/United Kingdom 2010

Director: Kevin Macdonald

With Channing Tatum, Jamie Bell, Donald Sutherland, Mark Strong

Certificate 12A 113m 57s

Rosemary Sutcliffe's thrilling 1954 novel *The Eagle of the Ninth*, which delves into the enduring mystery of the Roman legion believed to have disappeared in 120 AD, has seduced generations of young readers. For Kevin Macdonald's film version, the title has been tweaked at the 11th hour to *The Eagle*. Would that this were the only shortfall.

There are fleeting hints early on of the sort of grime and gusto that might have bolstered this unexciting, and unexcitable, buddy movie. Arriving at his new garrison, Roman centurion Marcus Aquila is informed that the latrines are clogged – exactly the sort of earthy detail a film needs to complicate any derring-do. The shot of a soldier vomiting prior to going into combat is in the same spirit. And Macdonald excels at the cut and thrust of battle: he keeps the camera in the thick of it during an early clash between Romans and rebels without giving us the breathing space of master shots and cutaways, and reduces a riverside ambush to a blur of flesh and blades. That said, it's to be regretted that the near-subliminal editing style of *Gladiator* (2000) has overtaken *Throne of Blood* (1957) and *Ran* (1985) as the presiding influence on the modern military set piece. (The eagle-eyed will spot Douglas Henshall snarling briefly in the throng; he has evidently been a victim of the editor's scissors as well as the Romans' swords.)

Once Marcus and his slave Esca trek north to retrieve the legion's standard (the eagle of the title), the film acquires the pace of a country ramble. Blame the company. Jamie Bell, who plays Esca, proved in *Hallam Foe* (2007) that his puckish, perky heroism can help lift an entire film. But Channing Tatum, the blockish, unresponsive teen idol cast (surely for commercial reasons) as Marcus, is a dead weight too cumbersome even for Bell to carry. It's almost funny when Tahar Rahim (*A Prophet*) appears in the second half, his magnetism undiluted by *Apocalypse* fancy-dress (mohawk, chalky make-up, animal skins). Emotional investment in the struggle to reclaim the eagle suddenly takes a back seat to our relief that a dynamic presence has arrived.

The filmmakers are to be congratulated for resisting the urge to shoehorn any spurious love interest into the material. Perhaps it was agreed there simply wasn't room given the inability of Marcus and Esca to keep their hands off one another. They have the standard fight-that's-really-a-fuck; the slave also pins his master down during a painful operation, and later tends to his wounded leg; and he passionately assures him, in a declaration reminiscent of key scenes in *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992) and *The English Patient* (1996), "I will return!" Surprises are thin on the ground. Atli



Close slave: Jamie Bell

Orvarsson's score is so thick with Celtic cliché that it could have been used in *Far and Away* (1992). It is but one of the elements that make the ostensible climax – which unveils the raggedy members of the Ninth in an *Expendables* moment – sink when it should have soared. ♥ Ryan Gilbey

CREDITS

Directed by

Kevin Macdonald

Produced by

Duncan Kenworthy

Screenplay

Jeremy Brock

Based on the novel *The*

Eagle of the Ninth by

Rosemary Sutcliffe

Director of

Photography

Anthony Dod Mantle

Editor

Justine Wright

Production Designer

Michael Carlin

Music

Atli Orvarsson

@Focus Features LLC

Production

Companies

Focus Features presents

in association with Film4

a Duncan Kenworthy

production

Executive Producers

Tessa Ross

Miles Ketley

Charles Moore

Co-producer

Caroline Hewitt

Unit Production

Managers

Hungary:

Kálmán Antal

Scotland:

Suzanne Reid

Production

Co-ordinators

Poly Jefferies

Hungary:

Eszter Kerekés

Financial Controller

Nathan Woods

Location Managers

Hungary:

Imre Légmán

Bea Beliczai

László Rórárius

Scotland Supervising:

Duncan Muggoch

Scotland:

Matt Jones

Post-production

Supervisor

Tania Blunden

Post-production

Co-ordinator

Faye Morgan

Production Consultant

Hungary:

Mária Ungor

2nd Unit Director

Alfonso Gomez-Rejon

Assistant Directors

1st: Tommy Gormley

2nd: Ben Dixon

Hungary:

Co-1st: Judit Soltész

Co-1st: Zsuzsanna

Gurbán

2nd: László Kádár

2nd Unit

1st: Toby Heffernan

2nd: Jeff Taylor

2nd: István Pócsai

Scotland

2nd: Alison Goring

Script Supervisors

Zoe Morgan

2nd Unit:

Orsolya Vercz

Dóra Simkó

Casting

Jina Jay

Casting Directors

Hungary:

Adrienn Lakatos

Eszter Izzo

2nd Unit Director

of Photography/

Operator

Masanobu Takayanagi

B Camera Operators/

Steadicam

Alastair Rae

2nd Unit:

Marcus Cole

Chief Lighting

Technician

Thomas Neivelt

2nd Unit Lighting

Gaffer

Attila Bilik

Key Grips

Imre Sisa

Stuart Bunting

2nd Unit:

Gábor Laczkó

Visual Effects

Prime Focus

Special Effects

Supervisors

Hungary:

Péter Szilágyi

Scotland:

Mike Kell

Supervising Art

Director

Peter Francis

Art Directors

Neal Callow

Hungary:

Zsuzsa Kismarty-

Lechner

Set Decorators

Rebecca Alleyway

Hungary:

Zoltán Horváth

Conceptual Artist

Chris Rosewarne

Property Masters

Muffin Green

Hungary:

Dávid Breier

Construction

Managers

László Nagyidai

László Nagyidai Jr

HB:

Gyula Herjeczki

Movieset:

József Kiss

BK:

Péter Kovács

Zsolt Sajó

Scotland:

Colin Fraser

Costumes

Michael O'Connor

Costume Supervisors

Georgina Gunner

Hungary:

Zsuzsa Stenger

2nd Unit:

Neil Murphy

Key Make-up/Hair

Artist

Lorna McGowan

Make-up/Hair Artists

Julie Dorrat-Keenan

Csilla Horváth

SYNOPSIS Southern Britain, 140 AD. Marcus Aquila, a Roman centurion, takes charge of a garrison. The soldiers fear his appointment will bring bad luck because Marcus's father led the notorious Ninth Legion, which vanished without trace, along with its golden eagle standard, 20 years before.

Marcus earns their respect when he subdues a native uprising, though he is injured in the attack. Staying with his uncle to convalesce, he watches a gladiator fighting a slave and discourages the crowd from endorsing the slave's death. His uncle acquires the slave, Esca, for him. When Marcus hears that the eagle has been spotted north of Hadrian's Wall, he sets out with Esca to retrieve it. On their travels, they meet Lucius, a soldier of the Ninth, who tells them of the legion's fierce battle with the Seal People. Marcus and Esca find the Seals, steal the eagle in the night and head south, with the Seals in pursuit. When Marcus falls ill, Esca goes on ahead and brings back with him Lucius and other ageing legionnaires of the Ninth. They triumph over the Seals, but Lucius is killed in the battle.

Marcus emancipates Esca and they both return home.

Agnes Petrovics
2nd Unit:
Szandra Biró
Nóra Kapás
Magdolna Czégér
Main Titles
Matt Curtis
End Roller
Fugitive Studios
Additional Music
Dave Fleming
Music Performed by
London Metropolitan
Orchestra
Men's Choir
Karikó alpyou
Conductor
Andy Brown
Orchestration
Julian Kershaw
Soundtrack
"The Return of the
Eagle" – Torc featuring
The Neff Brothers, Atli
Órvasson
Sound Design
Glenn Freemantle
Sound Mixer
Danniy Hambrook
**2nd Unit Sound
Recordist**
János Kóporosy
Re-recording Mixers
Ian Tapp
Richard Pryke
Stunt Co-ordinator
Domonkos Párdányi
Historical Adviser
Lindsay Allason-Jones
Gaelic Adviser
Morag Stewart
**Irish Language
Advisers**
Donnchadh Ó Baoill
Fidelma Mullane
Rody Gorman
**Military/Technical
Adviser**
Paul Hornsby

CAST

Channing Tatum
Marcus Aquila
Jamie Bell
Esca
Donald Sutherland
Uncle Aquila
Mark Strong
"Guem", Lucius
István Göz
cohort centurion
Bence Gerő
Cell boy/young Marcus
Denis O'Hare
Lutonus
Paul Ritter
Galba
Zsolt László
Paulus
Julian Lewis Jones
Cassius
Aladár Laklóth
Flavius Aquila
Marcell Miklós
fort legionary 1
Bálint Magyar
fort legionary 2
Ferenc Pataki
fort legionary 3
Bálint Antal
young legionary
Lukács Bicksey
druid
Douglas Henshall
Cradoc
James Hayes
Stephanos
András Faragó
captain of the gladiators
Simon Paisley Day
surgeon
Dakin Matthews
Claudius
Pip Carter
Placidus
Ben O'Brien
Milecastle guard
Róbert Bánlaki
young rogue warrior
Brian Gleeson
traveller 1
Jon Campling
traveller 2
Tahar Rahim
Seal prince

Thomas Henry
Seal boy
Ned Dennehy
Seal chief, the Horned
One
Ralph Aiken
patrician 1
Granville Saxton
patrician 2
Walter Van Dyke
patrician 3
László Adamecz
Hriszto Bablakov
Nikola Bablakov
András Bajtai
Sándor Bánya
Norbert Bilkó
Gábor Boda
Csaba Brém
András Czikós
Zoltán Dankó
Arnold Gerhát
András Handler
Gyula Harangozó
Csaba Kerecsei
András Honffy
Péter B. Horváth
Tamás Hemyák
Róbert Iván
Csaba Katona
Szilveszter Horváth
Gábor Kiss
Krisztián Krisztánovics
Sándor Lakrovits
Levente Ledényi
Miklós Lissa
Dániel Major
Dániel Megyeri
Dávid Mester
Sándor Micskó
Dániel Ábris Milvay
Dénes Nagy
Balázs Németh
Roland Pál
Richard Peto
György Popovics
Gergő Preszmayer
Zoltán Pusztai
Norbert Sárai
Balázs Schaffer
Péter Somogyvári
László Szabó
László Szilágyi
Mihály Szili
Sándor Szladky
Botond Tari
Dávid Tóth
Gergő Vándor
Antal Bobeckzy
Tibor Zettelmayer
Norbert Zsupán
Testudo legionaries
Alasdair Boyce
George Brown
Jack Carswell
Marcin Cichocki
Willie Dickson
Alex Irvine
Darren Kelly
Iain Leslie
Alasdair Macleod
Ruairidh Macleod
Calum Macrae
Colin Russell
Alan Thompson
key Seal warriors

Dolby Digital/DTS
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Universal Pictures
International UK & Eire
10,255 ft +3 frames

Eleanor's Secret

France/Italy 2009

Director: Dominique Monféry
Voices of Paul Bandey,
Pascal Berger, Christine Flowers

The second full-length feature by French animator Dominique Monféry, who cut his teeth on 1990s Disney features before directing the Oscar-nominated *Destino* (2003), *Eleanor's Secret* is an intermittently charming but often frustrating fable. It's primarily aimed at children around the same age as its seven-year-old protagonist Nathaniel, though their parents will firmly endorse its underlying message about the importance of learning to read.

Not that Nat's imagination has been stunted by the fact that he can't read for himself. Thanks to his recently deceased Aunt Eleanor he's been given a thorough grounding in classic fairytale literature, and when the characters themselves emerge from the books in her library he immediately recognises Alice, the White Rabbit, Puss in Boots, Pinocchio and Geppetto, Peter Pan and Captain Hook, Little Red Riding Hood and many others. Commendably, Monféry doesn't patronise his audience, assuming prior familiarity with Captain Hook's neuroses, Pinocchio's nasal affliction and the White Rabbit's timekeeping pedantry.

The film's primary virtues are visual. The pastel-coloured artwork was inspired by the work of Rebecca Dautremer, who has spent the past decade illustrating both classic (*Alice in Wonderland*) and modern fairytales and who contributed extensively to the film. The famous characters pull off the tricky balancing act of being sufficiently different from familiar models (Tenniel, Disney) but still instantly recognisable, while the human children, with round, disproportionately large heads and close-fitting hairstyles, are equally distinctive.

Sadly, the film fails to live up to this initial promise thanks to a script more content to go through familiar motions than navigate uncharted waters. The most conceptually spectacular set piece



On the back foot: 'Eleanor's Secret'

occurs relatively early, as Nat fuses the sound of a raging storm outside with his fears of being swamped by pages, words and letters, the latter swarming across his and our field of vision like a buzzing torrent of insects. Although the film isn't about dyslexia as such, it's a formidably powerful evocation of the condition – to the point where it unbalances the movie, as nothing else matches it for imaginative fecundity.

The second half's *Borrowers*-style 'quest', in which a now minuscule Nat, Alice, White Rabbit and unnamed ogre painstakingly make their way from the evil Pickall's antiques shop back to Eleanor's library across a beach strewn with obstacles both inanimate (sand, waves) and all too animate (seagulls, crabs, children), is treated far too matter-of-factly. Despite attempts at generating suspense through such stock ingredients as the race against the clock and the last-minute hitch, this section is only intermittently engaging (an underground encounter with a crab being the high point) and too often

overly predictable. It's a serious flaw in a film that explicitly champions the virtues of the imagination: the awful threat facing the world if Nat fails to read a spell by noon is that children will be saddled exclusively with non-fiction. ➡ **Michael Brooke**

CREDITS

Directed by
Dominique Monféry
Produced by
Clément Calvet
Screenplay
Anik Le Ray
Alexandre Reverend
Story
Anik Le Ray
Film Editor
Gaumont-Alphanim;
Cédric Chauveau
Production Designers
Gaumont-Alphanim;
Rebecca Dautremer
Richard Despres
Music
Christophe Héral

©Gaumont-Alphanim,
La Fabrique, La
Lanterna Magica
**Production
Companies**
Gaumont-Alphanim, La
Fabrique, La Lanterna
Magica presents with
the support of
Eurimages with the
participation of Canal+,
TF1, TPS Star with the
support of Centre
national de la
Cinématographie, La
Région Poitou-
Charentes,
Département de la
Charente, Région
Languedoc-Roussillon
in association with the
SOFICA, Soficinéma 4,
Cofinova 5
Executive Producers
Clément Calvet
Christian Davin
Maria Fares
Roberto Baratta
Xavier Julliot
Line Producers

Jean-Pierre Quenet
Anne-Sophie
Vanhollebeke
Jean-Baptiste Lere
Voice Director
Lionel Bourguet
Assistant Director
Gaumont-Alphanim
1st: Patrick Ermosilla
Casting
C'You Soon
Script Editor
Gaumont-Alphanim;
Jean-Philippe Robin
From a Development
Directed by
Henn Heidsieck

Gaumont-Alphanim
Storyboard
Rémi Chayé
Dominique Monféry
Production Manager
Thierry Pinardaud
Scene Planning
Raphaël Vicente-
Zambrano
Layout
Telman Morina
**Exposure Sheets/Key
Animation**
Christine Chatal
Patrick Imbert
Benoît Meurzac
Céline Papazian
Background Design
Fabrice Ascione
Christine Falaise
Set-up 3D
Pierre Lasbignes
3D Animator
Thierry Chaffoin
**Production
Accounting**
Olivier Delère
Script Co-ordinator
Murielle Canta

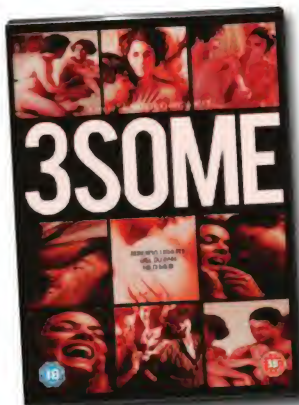
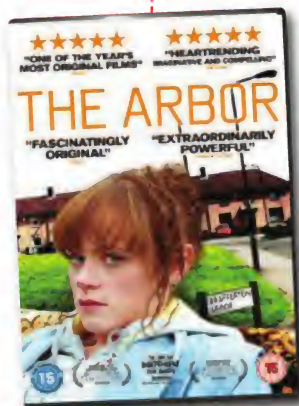
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Heads of Studio
Xavier Julliot

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the arbor
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£10

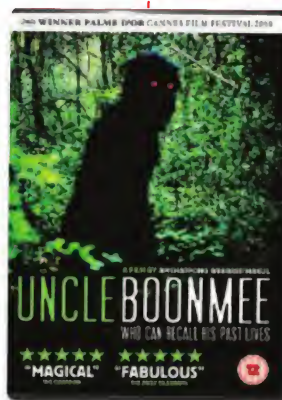


3some
subtitled/spanish
released 14/03/11

£12

uncle boonmee who can
recall his past lives
subtitled/thai
released 28/03/11

£12



genius within
released 28/03/11

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Onna Julliot
Storyboard
 Henri Heideiseck
 Xuhua Cao
 Hoël Caoussin
 Rémi Chayé
 Bruno Le Floch
Character Models
 Nathalie Biston
 Anita Marquardt
 Daniela Natcheva
 Patrick Saignes
Layout Supervision
 Eric Legeard
Layout Posing
 Christophe Barret
 Nathalie Biston
 Xuhua Cao
 Laurence Commeyras
 Mathilde Danton
 Eve Guastella
 Jean-Charles Mbotti
 Malolo
 Daniela Natcheva
Lead Backgrounds
Layout
 Richard Mithouard
Backgrounds Layout
 Jean-Charles Mbotti
 Malolo
 Telman Morina
 Daniela Natcheva
 Jean Palenstijn

La Lanterna Magica
Head of Studio
 Maria Fares
Head of Production
 Elena Toselli
Lead Colour
Background
 Marco Maris
Backgrounds
 Simona Cirio
 Alessia Cordini
 Giovanna Lopalco
 Francesca Morici
 Fabio Rossin
 Stefano Scapolan
 Verena Trausch
Production
Accounting
 Alessia Mascarino
Co-ordinator
 Stefania Longo

Mingyee Animation
Design Co. Ltd.
Head of Studio
 Yang Zhi Ming
Production
Co-ordinator
 Qin Shuang Yi
Animators
 Huang Yi Ke
 Zang Jun Ping
 Yang Zhi Ming
 Wang Song
 Zhong Zhi Qun
 Xu Jin
 Ai Meng Hua
 Zhang Ji Ping
 Li Zhi Tao
 Wang Yong
 Cheng Xiao Tao
 Meng Fei
 Cai Wen
 Liang Sheng
 Zhou Yi Hua
 Wang Xiao Jun
 Lin Jun Jie
 Su Hai
 Zhao Gang

Jade Digital Inc.
Head of Studio
 Wallace Wong
Production
Co-ordinator
 He Juanxian

Additional Animation
 Felong Animation Co.
 Ltd.
Orchestra
 Radio de Macédoine/
 F.A.M.E.'s Project
Conductor
 Ivan Illic
Post-production
Sound Supervisors
 Dominique Andre
 Nostradine Benguezzou
 Satchi Van Nyeenhoff
Sound Mixing
 Adam Wolny

Sound Editors
 Adrien Martre
 Fabien Crousillac

VOICE CAST

English language version
Paul Bandey
Pascal Berger
Christine Flowers
Joanne Forrest
David Gasman
Matthew Gécy
Mirabelle Kirkland
Sharon Mann
Douglas Rand
Barbara Weber-Scaff
Alan Wenger
Hester Wilcox

French language version
Jeanne Moreau
 Eleonore
Julie Gayet
 Nat's mother
Liliane Rovère
Pierre Richard
Denis Podalydès
Lorant Deutsch
Gonzales
Ruy Abitbol
Natacha Body
Pepino Capotondi
Yves Degen
Mélanie Dermont
Aaricia Dubois
Alayin Dubois
Arthur Dubois
Nicolas Dubois
Mahamud Embarek
Stéphane Flamant
Gauthier De Fauconval
Pablo Hertstens
Nathalie Hugo
Sasha Ktorza
Mathieu Moreau
Françoise Oriane
Prunelle Rulens
Le Thi Thuyet Song
Béatrice Wegniz

Dolby Digital
 In Colour

[1.78:1]

Distributor
 Soda Pictures

French theatrical title
Kéridy La Maison des contes
Italian theatrical title
Nat e il segreto di Eleonora

Essential Killing

Poland/Norway/
 Ireland/Hungary 2010
Director: Jerzy Skolimowski

With Vincent Gallo, Emmanuelle Seigner, Zach Cohen, Itzhak Ofir

Against the odds, the second short film about killing from a Polish master proves almost as compelling as the first. Jerzy Skolimowski's film deliberately excludes the sociological dimension of *A Short Film About Killing*, but its play with offscreen realities and genre does put it within shouting distance of Kieslowski's 'cinema of moral anxiety'. As usual Skolimowski focuses on the struggles of a loser, this time a jihadi in Afghanistan who is arrested and tortured by US forces after killing three 'enemy combatants'. He's unable to explain to his infidel jailers that he's lost his hearing at least temporarily because of a missile blast. An accident allows him to escape while he is being 'rendered' and he finds himself on the run in the harsh Polish winter. Motivated only by his survival instinct, he kills three or four more people and a dog to win himself a few more hours or days of life. But his situation is fundamentally hopeless, and his end is inevitable.

The genre elements in *Essential Killing* have given it the label of 'survival drama'. But there's nothing heroic about this anonymous jihadi. (He's never given a name on the soundtrack, only in the cast list in the end credits.) The film is anything but triumphalist, and it's hardly a celebration of the indomitable human spirit. Skolimowski has long specialised in challenging viewers not to empathise with fundamentally unsympathetic characters, and he starts here from the awareness that the jihadi's plight will trigger sympathy for purely circumstantial reasons. He periodically takes us inside the man's head: first to convey his panic at going deaf, second to show his attempts to reassure himself that he was acting on Allah's will by killing men in Afghanistan, and third to suggest that sentimental memories of a wife and child (or are they self-pitying dreams of what might have been?) prime his instinct to battle on through the snows and forests – and, crucially, to kill again. These glimpses of what's

going on in an increasingly unhinged mind merely underline that this man sees himself as being at war; in their stylised way, they're part of the film's realist foundations, anchoring the story in the realities of the 'war on terror' and 'extraordinary rendition'. The truth of this backstory prevents the film from becoming a vacuous fable in the vein of Losey's all-too-abstract *Figures in a Landscape*. The recognisable political context meshes with our memories of war movies and hunters-and-hunted plots to provide a charged fictional terrain on which Skolimowski can raise questions about humanity and inhumanity.

To call them 'questions', though, is probably overstating the case. The film's real achievement is to blur the line between detachment and involvement: to create a situation in which the viewer feels close to a dying protagonist while at the same time remaining free to judge his ever-more-desperate actions. The strategy is in some ways analogous with Hitchcock's fondness for generating unease by manipulating audiences into identifying with flawed and potentially villainous characters, but the only recent film that comes to mind as working in quite this way – with similar moral anxieties built into its structure and method – is Jia Zhangke's *Xiao Wu*, another empathetic portrait of a loser who finally vanishes from his own film.

Skolimowski made no films between 1991 and 2008 (he says he spent the time painting), and was apparently nudged back into the fray by acting in Cronenberg's *Eastern Promises*. It's interesting that his two 'comeback' films are both in some sense responses to the most popular films in Kieslowski's *Dekalog*: the exploration of desire and voyeurism in *Four Nights with Anna* (2008) plays like a commentary on the subtexts in *A Short Film About Love*, while this film, as we've noted, reframes the moral issues behind *A Short Film About Killing*. Skolimowski, though, is the 'wild man' that the urbane Kieslowski never could be, and in Vincent Gallo he's found an actor to match his own fearlessness. *Essential Killing* would be much less powerful if it didn't show the jihadi's physical sufferings with such visceral immediacy, and if the realism weren't strong enough to deliver surrealist shocks like the staggering final image.

► **Tony Rayns**

CREDITS

Directed by
 Jerzy Skolimowski
Produced by
 Ewa Paskowska
 Jerzy Skolimowski
Screenplay
 Jerzy Skolimowski
 Ewa Paskowska
Director of Photography
 Adam Sikora
Chief Editor
 Réka Lemhényi
Production Designer
 Joanna Kaczynska
Music
 Pawel Mykietyn

©Skopia Film, Cylinder Productions, Element Pictures, Mythberg Films, Syrena Films, Canal+ Poland
Production Companies
 A. Jeremy Thomas presentation
 A. Jerzy Skolimowski film
 A Skopia Film production
 co-produced by Cylinder Productions, Element Pictures, Mythberg Films
 in co-production with Canal+ Poland, Syrena Films and co-financed by Akson Studio, Task Films
 With the support of The Polish Film Institute, Bord Scannán na hÉireann/The Irish Film Board, Det Norske Filminstituttet/The Norwegian Film Institute, MMKA – Magyar Mozgokép Kozalapítvány/Motion Picture Public Foundation of Hungary, Eurimages
 A Polish Film Institute co-financed production

Executive Producers
 Jerzy Thomas
 Andrew Lowe
 Peter Watson
Co-producers
 Ingrid Lili Hogtun
 Jozsef Berger
 Ed Guiney
Line Producers
 Norwegian Unit:
 Bjarne Bjørndalen
 Israeli Unit:
 Marek Rozenbaum
Production Managers
 Polish Unit:
 Andrzej Stempowski
 Norwegian Unit:
 Bjørn Fjærestad
Production Supervisor
 Israeli Unit:
 Itai Tamir
Production Co-ordinators
 Polish Unit:
 Natalia Stempowska-Szpadzik
 Norwegian Unit:
 Terje Strømstad
 Israeli Unit:
 Shirley Hermann
Production Accountant
 Polish Unit:
 Robert Bachurzewski
Location Managers
 Polish Unit:
 Dariusz Kłodowski
 Israeli Unit:
 Eran Kotzki
Post-production Supervisors
 Dávid Jancsó
 Nemeser
 Jakub Chłczuk
 Malgorzata Sandecka
2nd Unit Directors
 Polish Unit:
 József Skolimowski
 Michał Skolimowski
Assistant Directors
 1st: Jérôme Dasser
 Polish Unit – Office
 1st: Julia Popkiewicz
 Polish Unit
 2nd: Krzysztof Kasior
 2nd: Teresa Czepiec
 Norwegian Unit
 2nd: Tessa Eggesbo
 Israeli Unit
 2nd: Jonathan Rozenbaum
Script Supervisor
 Beata Krokiewicz

Casting Director
 Polish Unit:
 Pawel Czajor
Additional Writing
 James McManus
Underwater Photography
 Polish Unit:
 Marcin Boguszewski
Camera Operators
 A: Rafał Paradowski
 B: Ciarán Kavanagh
 2nd Unit – Norwegian Unit
 Jens Ramborg
 Patrick Safström
Gaffers
 Polish Unit:
 Pawel Cichocki
 Norwegian Unit:
 Jarl Johnsen
 Israeli Unit:
 Udi Rimer
Key Grips
 Polish Unit:
 Jerzy Nagal
 Israeli Unit:
 Guy Neeman
Visual Effects
 Platige Image
 Alvernia Studios
Special Effects
 Israeli Unit:
 Pini Klavir
Special Effects Co-ordinator
 Polish Unit:
 Janusz Bykowski
Editor
 Maciej Pawlinski
Additional Editors
 Dávid Jancsó
 Wanda Kiss
Art Director
 Polish Unit:
 Jacek Cechowski
Set Decorators
 Polish Unit:
 Julia Kasprzak
 Israeli Unit:
 Ariel Glazer
Props Masters
 Polish Unit:
 Bogdan Piotrowski
 Norwegian Unit:
 Per Henry Borch
 Israeli Unit:
 Arie Weiss
Construction Manager
 Polish Unit:
 Marcin Trybalski
Costume Designer
 Anne Hamre
Wardrobe Mistress
 Israeli Unit:
 Inbal Rozenal
Make-up Designer
 Barbara Conway
Special Effects Make-up Artists
 Polish Unit:
 Tomasz Matraszek
 Norwegian Unit:
 Janne Rohmen
Hair Stylist
 Polish Unit:
 Robert Kupisz
Keyboard Soloist
 Pawel Mykietyn
Santur Soloist
 Marta Maslanka
Ney/Duduk Soloist
 Sebastian Wledek
Daf Soloist
 Robert Siwak
Accordion Soloist
 Fabian Włodarek
Electric Guitar Soloist
 Pawel Stankiewicz
Bass Guitar Soloist
 Maciej Szczepiński
Percussion Soloist
 Karol Ludew
Soundtrack
 "Nie Toleruje – Bije", "Y Dopatrzienia" – Moja Adrenalina
Music Adviser
 Janice Ginsberg
Sound
 Robert Flanagan
Recording Mixer
 Michelle Cunniffe
Supervising Sound Editor
 Fiadhnaí McCann
Stunt Co-ordinators
 Polish Unit:
 Robert Brzezinski
 Norwegian Unit:
 Kristoffer Jørgensen
Consultants
 Polish Unit:

Piotr Kolodziejczyk
Szymon Skalski
Konrad Orlowski

CAST

Vincent Gallo
Mohammed
Emmanuelle Seigner
Margaret
Zach Cohen
American contractor 1
Iftach Ofir
American contractor 2
Nicola Cleve Broch
helicopter pilot 1
Stig Frode Henriksen
helicopter pilot 2
David Price
interrogating officer
Tracy Spencer Shipp
young soldier in SUV
Mark Gaspersich
head of pursuit team
Phillip Goss
military doctor
Klaudia Kaca
woman on a bicycle
Dariusz Juzyszyn
logger
Raymond Josey
American soldier
Robert Mazurkiewicz
hunter
Janusz Wojtarowicz
Margaret's husband
Pawel Baranek
drunk farmer 1
Marcin Galazyn
drunk farmer 2
David Jefferson
Donnell Knox
Geo D. Olivier
American soldiers
Kamil Ruszecki
Stanislaw Marek
Lukasik
soldiers
Jérôme Dassier
SUV driver
Geir Marring
fisherman
Bakar Mustapha
Øystein Gunnar Nordli
Patrick Gudmundsen
Morten Moum
Kristoffer Kaayne
Kalsasas
Rune Øgaard
Daniel William
Verstegen
Vilbjørn Ruus
Håvar Austli
Daniel Brattnud
Kenneth Berger
Even Løken Bergan
Morten Enger
Christian Teisnes
Steffan Johansen
Niklas Nygaard
Lars Markus Verpeide
Bakke

Lars Jensen
Kamil Hagberg
Ivar Egg Gussgard
Thor Arne Thomassen
Age Ruste
Lars Jonas Garberg
Ola Østbye Høiegggen
Louis Rustam Foss
Johannes Randem
Trygve Gausdal
Christian Aaslie
Aras Kanani
Ferdinand Gulbrandsen
Victor Alexander Viita
Torgim Ødegaard
Uno Wahl
Varg Strande
Anders Kile
Grønningaeter
Bjørn Ivar Lund
Håkon Spiers Færvik
Frank Benjamin Finger
Thomas Berg
Bjørn Fjærestad
Fredrik Formo
Ivan Andreassen
Magnus Opsahl
Eirik Daleng
Thomas Berg Jensen
Emerson Reichert
Gomes
extras

Dolby Digital
In Colour
Part-subtitled

Distributor
Artificial Eye Film
Company

Faster

USA 2010

Director: George Tillman Jr
With Dwayne Johnson, Billy Bob Thornton, Oliver Jackson-Cohen
Certificate 15 97m 57s

Faster is a would-be B-movie without the guts to summon up the necessary amoral callousness. Having started with an enjoyably shameless opening sprint, director George Tillman Jr (*Soul Food*, *Notorious*) slows things down with the blinding revelation that brutal vigilante retaliations may induce guilt or ambivalence later on. That administering merciless and indiscriminate violence is hardly a good way to sleep at night isn't news to anyone who's gone to the movies since the death of Charles Bronson, but the film moans over this as if it were a great discovery.

Faster is so mixed up about whether or not to aim for exploitation or redemption it can't even sort out its pretensions. As in Walter Hill's *The Driver* (1978), characters are billed as proper nouns – Driver (Dwayne Johnson), Cop (Billy Bob Thornton) and Killer (Oliver Jackson-Cohen) being the points of the film's plot triangle – or have symbolic names (such as Carla Gugino's Cicero) or seemingly random ones (Mike Epps as 'Roy Grone').

As Driver, Johnson has a body built for destruction; after ten years in prison following a botched heist, his character is ready to punish all those who killed his brother and left him in jail. Cartoonishly overblown, all rippling veins and stupidly large head, he's seething to wreak havoc. But after a fine bloodthirsty start, he spends more and more time between killings listening to the radio, where a voice calling for salvation through Jesus Christ increasingly foreshadows the blandly redemptive places the film's set to go.

Tillman gives his film the typical colour-corrected-to-death look of contemporary action movies, which isn't a big sin. The screenplay, though, is impossible, at first clearly signalling for the audience to support Johnson's killings (especially when his victim is a creepy paedophile) but then indicating doubt by turning his enemies into increasingly guilt-ridden figures. Vigilante movies are inherently reactionary and deplorable, but they're also naturally cinematic showcases for colourful violence; anti-vigilante movies are mostly joyless scolds, primary-school lectures for dimwitted adults. *Faster* is marketed as the former ("Slow justice is no justice") but quickly reveals itself as the latter. It sputters out 20 minutes in, shortly after Epps's character calls a fat man "you bald-headed precious" – the last moment that's surprising, guiltily funny and non-programmatic. As joyless in its violence as it is unconvincing in its religion, it's neither pious nor prurient; it's mostly just glumly hypocritical.

♦♦ Vadim Rizov

SYNOPSIS US, the present. After ten years in prison, the driver for a botched robbery sets out to kill everyone responsible for his brother's death. A flashback shows the brothers and their crew successfully robbing the bank, then being robbed themselves by a group of sadists who torture them and kill the driver's brother.

The driver kills the first two robbers while being tracked by a hired assassin and a police officer. He visits his ex and later his mother to try to find out who was responsible for his gang's betrayal. Killing his third target (now working as a bouncer) proves difficult, as the driver begins to feel guilt. The driver lets the last of the robbers go free, as the man has repented and becomes a preacher.

When the assassin shows up to kill him, the driver refuses to pick up his gun and fight. The police officer arrives and shoots the driver in the back of the head: it is revealed that years ago the police officer was a junkie; he set up the driver because he needed money, and he has hired the assassin. He leaves the driver for dead, but a steel plate in the driver's head – implanted following the bank robbery – has protected him.

CREDITS

Directed by
George Tillman Jr
Produced by
Martin Shafer
Liz Grotzer
Tony Gayton
Robert Teitel
Written by
Tony Gayton
Joe Gayton
Director of Photography
Michael Grady
Edited by
Dirk Westervelt
Production Designer
David Lazan
Music
Clint Mansell

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Worldwide Acquisitions
Inc.

Production Companies
CBS Films and TriStar
Pictures present a
Castle Rock
Entertainment/State
Street Pictures
production
A film by George Tillman Jr
Executive Producers
Joe Gayton
Dara Weintraub
Unit Production Manager
Dara Weintraub
Production Supervisor
Christa Vausbinder
Production Co-ordinator
Shari LaFranchi Blakney
Production Accountant
Paul Belenardo
Location Manager
Christine Bonnem
2nd Unit Director
Darin Prescott
Assistant Directors
1st: Scott Robertson
2nd: Jonas Spaccarotelli
2nd Unit
1st: Alexander H. Gayner
1st: Justin Muller
Script Supervisors
Sharon Reynolds-Enriquez
2nd Unit:
Kathy McHugh
Casting
Sarah Halley Finn
2nd Unit Directors of Photography
Igor Meglic
Arenal
Dylan Goss
Camera Operators
A: Will Amot
B: Darin Moran
Steadicam Operator
The Will Amot
Chief Lighting Technicians
Michael Karasick
2nd Unit:
Ryan McCoy

1st Company Grips
Aubrey Husar
2nd Unit:
Mark K. Kuromoto
Visual Effects
Wildfire VFX
Additional:
Handmade Digital Inc.
Red Hive VFX
Invisible Effects
FuseFX
Raymond Bushey
Ed W. Marsh
Special Effects Co-ordinator
Eric Rylander
Film Editor
Blake Maniquis
Additional Editor
Elizabeth Ross
Art Director
Andrew E.W. Murdock
Set Designer
Jeff Ozimek
Set Decorator
Jan Pascale
Property Master
Will Blount
Construction Co-ordinator
Bill Holmquist
Costume Designer
Salvador Pérez
Costume Supervisor
Gala Autumn
Make-up Department Head
Jean A. Black
Special Effects Make-up
Christien Tinsley
Make-up Artist/Tattoo Design
Rick Stratton
Hair Stylist
Terre Velazquez-Owen
Main Title Design
David Acampora
End Titles
Wildfire Titles
Orchestrated/Conducted by
Matt Dunkley
Soundtrack
"I Am a Poor Pilgrim of Sorrow" – Old Regular Baptists (Indian Bottom Association): "Goodbye My Friend" – Guido De Angelis, Maurizio De Angelis: "Grifos muertos" – Jeffrey Luck
Lucas: "Pobre palomito" – Juan Guerrero y su grupo: "Just Dropped In (To See What Condition My Condition Was in)" – Kenny Rogers & The First Edition: "I Wanna Be Your Dog" – Iggy Pop: "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (Theme)" by Ennio Morricone: "Seti" – Mitchell Townsend: "Bloodbuzz Ohio" – The National: "En mi viejo San Juan" – Javier Solís: "Lean In" – Top Floor: "Trouble in My Way": "John the Revelator" (trad): "Short Change

Hero – The Heavy
Music Consultant
James A. Rota
Supervising Sound Designer
Myron Nettinga
Sound Mixer
David Obermeyer
Re-recording Mixers
Myron Nettinga
Marti D. Humphrey
Supervising Sound Editor
Lawrence H. Mann
Stunt Co-ordinators
Darin Prescott
Co-stunt Co-ordinator:
Tanoai Reed
2nd Unit:
Scott Rogers
Technical Advisers
Chic Daniel
George L. Tarrant Jr

CAST

Dwayne Johnson
Driver
Billy Bob Thornton
Cop
Oliver Jackson-Cohen
Killer
Carla Gugino
Cicero
Maggie Grace
Lily
Moon Bloodgood
Manna
Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje
evangelist
Tom Berenger
warden
Mauricio Lopez
prison guard
James Gaines
inmate
Jan Hoag
receptionist
Courtney Gains
telemarketer
Michael Irby
Vaquero
Josh Clark
uniform
Michael Blain-Rozgay
TV anchor
Mike Epps
Roy Grone
Sid S. Liufau
Kenny
Xander Berkeley
Sergeant Mallory
Aaron Behr
cohort 1
Jeff Daniel Phillips
cohort 2
Matt Gerald
driver's brother
John Cirigliano
old guy
Jonna Walsh
teen girl
Kiyomi Calloway
little girl
Aedin Mincks
Tommy
Michole Briana White
TV anchor 2
Clint Palmer
ranch house husband

Jennifer Carpenter
woman
Stephanie Nash
TV reporter
Geraldine Kearns
preacher's wife
Buzz Belmondo
preacher
Lester Speight
Baphomet
Ski Cutty Carr
bouncer
Steven Charles
cowboy
Julia Pace Mitchell
cashier
Jack Wallace
bathroom attendant
Sara Arrington
nurse
Julius Tennon
doctor
Stacey E. Ashmont
nurse 2
Seth Burben
doctor 2
Annie Corley
mother
Jeffri Kent Norat
detective
Nadja Minyon
evangelist's wife
Alexandra Brown
Charlotte Crossley
Monique Donnelly
Carmel Echols
Joel Echols
Gloria Garayua
James Gilstrap
Mark Gutierrez
Clydene Jackson
Bobbette Jamison-Harrison
Christopher Johnson
Ayana Layli
Laura Lively
Rick Logan
Guy Maeda
Kamilah Marshall
Myrna Matthews
Ali B. Olmo
Marisa Rawlins-Bradfield
Sally Stevens
John West
gospel choir

Dolby Digital/DTS/
SDDS
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Sony Pictures Releasing

8,815 ft +8 frames



Dead man running: Vincent Gallo

Gnomeo & Juliet

USA/United Kingdom 2011

Director: Kelly Asbury

Voices of James McAvoy, Emily Blunt, Matt Lucas, Ashley Jensen

Certificate U 83m 45s

A Reuters news report in 2008 described *Gnomeo & Juliet* as a "loose and edgy CGI-animated adaptation of Shakespeare's play". "Loose" is true enough – the film turns *Romeo and Juliet* into a yarn about feuding garden gnomes – but the "edgy" part will baffle anyone who sees the film. There are two possible reasons for this. One is that *Gnomeo* – which was in development with various parties for nearly a decade – may have been genuinely conceived as an edgy comedy, perhaps on the lines of *Shrek* (2001), before the game-plan changed (*Gnomeo*'s director is Kelly Asbury, who co-directed 2004's massively popular *Shrek 2*). Another possibility, though, is that the edgy tag is a forlorn ploy to get audiences other than the under-tens and their parents to try a film called *Gnomeo & Juliet*.

For the benefit of parents, *Gnomeo* isn't edgy at all, but it is often amusing, with flashes of real wit. At the beginning, for example, we see the front gates of two semi-detached houses belonging to the bickering Montague and Capulet neighbours. Both are numbered 2B, but one of the numbers is crossed out (that is, not 2B). There are similar gentle quips throughout the film, if not at the quickfire rate of the best TV cartoons. Like *The Muppet Christmas Carol* (1992), in which the hooknosed muppet Gonzo played Charles Dickens, *Gnomeo & Juliet* covers its back culturally by bringing in the author being travestied – in this case, a statue of Shakespeare voiced by Patrick Stewart, who insists that the star-crossed gnome lovers must die, smirking "Told you so!" when they seem to bite the dust. Of course, a happy ending follows.

As one might expect, the gnome Juliet (voiced by Emily Blunt) has her feistiness amped up, as she leaves her pedestal to don ninja garments and bond with Gnomeo (James McAvoy) during an aerial battle in a greenhouse. (The anime fantasy TV series *Romeo x Juliet*, made in 2007, did much the same thing to Juliet, turning her into a Zorro-

style masked heroine.) However, like many cartoons, *Gnomeo* is stolen by its easy-to-love support players, especially a mob of ceramic stealth bunnies who signal each other by ear, and Ashley Jensen's excitable tragedian frog, who stands in for Juliet's traditional nurse. The CGI animation – produced by Starz Animation Toronto, which made the sci-fi animation *9* (2009) – is undistinguished but very adequate for this modest comedy.

Gnomeo's other diversion for grown-ups is its plethora of familiar voices. Maggie Smith and Michael Caine rub shoulders with Stephen Merchant, Jason Statham and Ozzy Osbourne, while cartoon fans might recognise Jim Cummings, one of the most prolific voice actors, as a lovelorn ornamental flamingo. The quality of the music rather depends on your taste for Elton John, whose tunes run through the film – *Gnomeo* was produced by the singer's own company, Rocket Pictures. For all the trimmings, it seems unlikely that 'Shakespeare with gnomes' could ever have been sold to a wide audience, and Disney was almost certainly right when it passed on making the film. However, Disney is still distributing it as a Touchstone Picture – strange that Touchstone started life as Disney's adult label. ➤ **Andrew Osmond**

CREDITS

Directed by
Kelly Asbury
Produced by
Baker Bloodworth
Steve Hamilton Shaw
David Furnish
Screenplay
Andy Riley
Kevin Cecil
Mark Burton
Emily Cook
Kathy Greenberg
Steve Hamilton Shaw
Kelly Asbury
Story
Rob Sprackling
John Smith
Andy Riley
Kevin Cecil
Kelly Asbury
Steve Hamilton Shaw
Based on an original
screenplay by Rob
Sprackling, John Smith
Editor
Catherine Apple
**Production Design and
Art Direction by**
Karen de Jong
**Original Score
Composed by**
James Newton Howard
Chris Bacon

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**Production
Companies**
Touchstone Pictures
presents a Rocket
Pictures production
Executive Producer
Elton John
Co-producer
Igor Khat
**Pre-production
Co-producer**
Production – London:
Lyndon Ruddy
Mark Walton
Jim Kammerud
David Lowery
**Visual Effects
Supervisor**
Corey D. Smith
**Animation Produced
at**
Starz Animation
Animation
Animation Supervisor:
Henry F. Anderson III
Supervising Animators:
Adam Beck
Charlie Bonifacio
Michael Chaffe
Morgan Ginsberg
Daryl Graham
Doug Williams
Department Head:
Dave Baas
Animators:
Vanessa Arsen
Brendan Beesley
Patrice Bérubé
Nev Bezaire
Evan Bonifacio
Renée Bruntton
Lawrence Choi
Mary Corvase
Greg Court
Dave Crispino
Trevor Deane-Freeman
Michael Dhomey
Graham Finley
Robinson Gennings
Derek Gowland
Scott Heatherley
Elhan Hurd
Samad Khan
Aaron Kirby
Paul Kohut
Bartosz Kosmowski
Michael Langford
Jeremy Lazare
Jesse Lickman
Mike 'Moe' Merrell
Christie Moore
Praveen 'Sofia'
Nadaraju



My ideal gnome: 'Gnomeo & Juliet'

Patrick Collins
Ricardo Curtis
Gary Dunn
Warren Leonhardt
Johnny Rice
Dean Roberts
Darren Vandenburg
Jean Paul Vermeulen
Andreas Von Andrian
Additional Story:
Lyndon Ruddy
Mark Walton
Jim Kammerud
David Lowery
**Visual Effects
Supervisor**
Corey D. Smith
**Animation Produced
at**
Starz Animation
Animation
Animation Supervisor:
Henry F. Anderson III
Supervising Animators:
Adam Beck
Charlie Bonifacio
Michael Chaffe
Morgan Ginsberg
Daryl Graham
Doug Williams
Department Head:
Dave Baas
Animators:
Vanessa Arsen
Brendan Beesley
Patrice Bérubé
Nev Bezaire
Evan Bonifacio
Renée Bruntton
Lawrence Choi
Mary Corvase
Greg Court
Dave Crispino
Trevor Deane-Freeman
Michael Dhomey
Graham Finley
Robinson Gennings
Derek Gowland
Scott Heatherley
Elhan Hurd
Samad Khan
Aaron Kirby
Paul Kohut
Bartosz Kosmowski
Michael Langford
Jeremy Lazare
Jesse Lickman
Mike 'Moe' Merrell
Christie Moore
Praveen 'Sofia'
Nadaraju

Jeff Panko
Andres Puente
Athavan Rajaratnam
Peter Reynolds
Sue Hyunsook Shim
Rob Silvestri
Richard Smith
Richard Spriggs
Nick Starcevic
Eric Stinnissen
Danny Testani
Archie Villaverde
Cayle Ward
Brad Willis
David Zach
Technical Director:
Philip Luk
Animation Co-ordinator:
Sean McAlair
**Motion Capture
Services for Dog and
Human Characters**
Provided by
Red Eye Studio
Effects
Artistic Supervisor:
Warren Lawley
Animators:
Steve Au
Dean Blaser
Alexander Feigin
Pearl Hsu
Adam Jeziak
Min Young Kim
Juliana Machado
Bahador Mehrpouya
Stephen G. Tucker
Technical Director:
Markus Ng
CG Supervisor
Avi J. Katz
Lighting/Compositing
Xavier Matia Bernasconi
Leads:
Belma Abdicevic
Andrew J. McPhillips
Barbara Meyers
Nikola Milosevic
Paul Stodolny
Department Head:
Anna Wagner-Lopez
Key Lighters:
Steven Mark Chen
Paul Dobson
Simon Fung
Tibor Kovacs
Shun Sing Edward Lee
Jamie Minett
Sean Montgomery
Anja Stitic
Sumit Sun

Armen Melkonian
Rob Sadler
Rob Elliott
**Scene Prep/Final
Layout**
Senior Artists:
Josh Clark
Gregoire Picher
Technical Director:
Nelson Yu
Stereoscopic 3-D
Stereographer:
Eric Doren
Production Manager:
Brian Lynch
CG Supervisor:
Armen Melkonian
Elna Iskoz
Keren Kurtz
Kang Sub Lee
So Hyeon (Soh) Lee
Jing Jing Liu
Carlos Lucas (Kuka)
Emmanuel Maniez
Ravindra Patel
Nachiket Pujari
Kevin Rostant
Pawel Szpytko
Ben Tillmann
Kyung-Hoon (Ian) Woo
Technical Directors:
Andrew Alzner
Aleksi Moriarty
Kym Watts
Vincent Jungghua Xu
Yungsiow Yang
Production
Co-ordinator:
Queleigh Sade
Surfacing
Artistic Supervisor:
Freddy Chaleur
Leads:
Trevor W. Morgan
Aaron Webster
Technical Directors:
James Roland
Deschenes
Lu Lui
**Artistic Supervisor –
Rigging/Character
Finaling**
Edwin M. Ng
Layout
Artistic Supervisor:
Clive Hutchings
Artistic Supervisor –
Final Layout/Gardening:
Mark Neysmith
Leads:
Brian Foster

SYNOPSIS Stratford-upon-Avon, the present. Quarrelling neighbours the Montagues and the Capulets live in adjoining houses. In their gardens, the gnomes and other ornaments have a similar ongoing feud. Gnomeo, one of the blue Montague gnomes, is on a nighttime raid when he encounters the feisty Juliet, one of the red Capulet tribe. The two fall for each other, meeting secretly. They're abetted by Juliet's friend Nanette, a frog, and advised by Featherstone, a flamingo.

Gnomeo is involved in a duel (a race on lawnmowers) with the ferocious Capulet gnome Tybalt. It ends with the accidental smashing of Tybalt; in the subsequent riot, Gnomeo seems to be destroyed as well. Swearing revenge, the Montague gnomes infiltrate their owners' home and gain access to their computer, ordering a monster lawnmower called a Terrafirmator. In the subsequent battle, the Montagues unleash the Terrafirmator, which wrecks both gardens. Gnomeo returns, but both he and Juliet apparently perish when the lawnmower self-destructs. Miraculously, the lovers emerge from the wreckage, and the celebrating gnomes make peace.

Art Production

Designers:
Richard Chen
Jeff Dickson
Julie Eberley
Andy Ng
Carlos Zaragoza
Kyran Kelly
Production
Co-ordinator:
Leo Martin
Terraformator
Sequence Design:
Kevin R. Adams
Character/Sets
Senior Character
Technical Director:
Eduardo Pili
Character Technical
Director:
Louis Vottero
Technical Director:
Daniel W. Bissell
**Artistic Supervisor –
Modelling**
Iain McLuckie
Title Design
Matt Curtis
Additional Music
Stuart Michael Thomas
Gad Emile Zeitune
Original Songs
Music:
Elton John
Lyrics:
Bernie Taupin
Choir Master
Jenny O'Grady
Orchestra Conductor
Pete Anthony
Orchestrations by
Jon Kull
John Ashton Thomas
Jeff Atmajian
Marcus Trump
Conrad Pope
Music Supervisors
Kaylin Frank
Matt Walker
Soundtrack
"Crocodile Rock":
"Rocket Man"; "Hello
Hello" – Elton John,
Lady Gaga; "Your Song";
"Don't Go Breaking My
Heart" – Elton John, Kiki
Dee; "I've Got a Lovely
Bunch of Coconuts";
"Love Builds a Garden";
"Saturday Night's
Aight (for Fighting)";
"Your Song" – Elton
John; "Bernie and the
Jets"; "Tiny Dancer";
"The Tiki Tiki Tiki Room"
by Richard Sherman,
Robert Sherman –
Wally Boag, Fulton
Burley, Thurl
Ravenscroft, The
Mellorments; "Don't Cha";
"The Bitch Is Back";
"Sorry Seems to Be the
Hardest Word"; "I'm Still
Standing"; "Crocodile
Rock" – Nelly Furtado
featuring Elton John
Video Reference
Choreographer:
John O'Connell
Reference Shoot
Managers:
Lorry Ann Shea
Mitchell Cohen
Camera:
Al Vasquez
Sound Design
Glenn Freemantle
Tom Sayers
Re-recording Mixers
Chris Burdon
Doug Cooper
Richard Pryke

VOICE CAST

James McAvoy
Gnomeo
Emily Blunt
Juliet
Matt Lucas
Benry
Ashley Jensen
Nanette
Michael Caine
Lord Redbrick

Jim Cummings

Featherstone
Maggie Smith
Lady Bluebury
Jason Statham
Tybalt
Patrick Stewart
Bill Shakespeare
Ozzy Osbourne
Fawn
Stephen Merchant
Pans
Julie Walters
Miss Montague
Hulk Hogan
Terraformator voice-
over
Richard Wilson
Mr Capulet
Dolly Parton
Dolly Gnome
Julia Brans
stone fish
James Daniel Wilson
fishing gnome
Tim Bentinck
conjoined gnome left
Julio Bonet
marking gnome
Neil McCaul
conjoined gnome right
Maurissa Horwitz
Call Me doll

video reference dancers

Lou Becker
Kayla Bingham
Dominic Chaiduang
Melissa Emrico
Scott Fowler
Leslie Goldbach
Hunter Hamilton
Kyle Hill
Marissa Labog
Stephanie Landwehr
Quinn Lipton
Lachlan McCarthy
Mandy Moore
Kelli Shimada
Robert Schwartz
John Todd
Rob Westin

Dolby Digital/DTS/
SDDS

Colour by

Technicolor

US prints by

DeLuxe

International prints by

Technicolor

Distributor

EI Films

7537 ft +8 frames

His & Hers

Ireland 2009

Director: Ken Wardrop

Certificate U 83m 12s

For his award-winning 2004 short *Undressing My Mother*, Irish director Ken Wardrop filmed his elderly mother, a farmer's wife for 44 years, taking off her clothes and talking frankly about her ageing body and the marks it bears of her life. Now his feature debut turns the camera on 70 women of all ages from the Irish midlands, giving them a similar opportunity to talk about their lives and families – notably the fathers, husbands and sons who, although never shown, become the film's structuring absence.

The great originality of Wardrop's film is that the interviews are sequenced in age order, from youngest to oldest, so that *His & Hers* begins with a shot of a gurgling baby girl, works its way up through various toddlers, children, teenagers, young mothers and middle-aged women, and climaxes with a run of increasingly elderly pensioners. The effect is gently surreal and initially disorienting – akin to watching a slowed-down version of the trick beloved of TV commercials in which a succession of faces rapidly morphs into the next.

Held in elegantly composed fixed shots – and alone in the frame in endless permutations of the banal suburban kitchen, living room and bedroom – each woman in turn holds forth for a few minutes at a time. Their talk is of the everyday, of routines, preoccupations, domestic annoyances and longings, but it is frequently hilarious. Tales of playtime give way to those of adolescent romance (full of the primacy of the text message, and in which a 'long' relationship

SYNOPSIS Seventy women from the midlands of Ireland are interviewed about their lives, in particular their relationships with their fathers, sons, boyfriends and husbands. The interviews are arranged in ascending order of age, beginning with a baby girl and ending with elderly women. No males are seen until the final shot which shows an elderly man with a Zimmer frame.

might extend all the way back to the start of the year), evolving later into affectionate but exasperated revelations of married life, then taking a poignant turn into stories of dotage. These final stages are still wonderfully funny, typically as a grandmother discusses her trouble getting to grips with modern contrivances such as "the emails", but also immensely moving as the women's lives become ever more coloured by illness and death.

Menfolk are talked about endlessly. We see a sheet featuring a garish black panther hanging in a doorway, unmistakably demarcating a husband's boyish den. We hear of one husband's rare but sacrosanct ventures into the kitchen for the fastidious preparation of a curry that will use every utensil available, creating mountains of washing-up of which he considers himself absolved. But the men's invisibility in the film – at least until the exhilaratingly ambiguous final shot – assumes a melancholy dimension by the time *His & Hers* reaches its septuagenarians and the men's out-of-sightness becomes real, an ineluctable, mortal absence.

These mini monologues laid end-to-end amount to something Alan Bennett would have been proud to write. Talking heads may be better suited to television but Wardrop's film is assuredly cinematic in its

compositions, the grainy, pastel-hued 16mm images a joy to behold. If those low shots of empty hallways fleetingly recall Ozu, the association is not inappropriate: Wardrop's film is correspondingly preoccupied with women as the linchpins of domestic life.

Indeed, if *His & Hers* is open to criticism, it is in this concentration on women in their household roles. Though many dozens of women are interviewed, their lives are homogeneous to the point of interchangeability, each of the adults defined by their roles as wife and mother. Wardrop apparently pooled his interviewees from a radius of 50 miles, so perhaps he needed to look further afield for more progressive examples of womanhood, or perhaps his selection was finessed to make the film's phasing structure seamless. Or it may be that, having accumulated material this rich, comic, sad and telling, Wardrop decided those 50 miles were enough. **Samuel Wigley**

CREDITS

Directed by
Ken Wardrop
Produced by
Andrew Freedman
**Directors of
Photography**
Michael Lavelle
Kate McCullough
Film Editor
Ken Wardrop
Music
Denis Clohessy

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**Production
Companies**
A Venom Film
production for Bord
Scannán na hÉireann/
Irish Film Board
A film created in the
Irish Midlands with the
participation of Bord
Scannán na hÉireann/
Irish Film Board
**Production
Co-ordinator**
Sheena O'Byrne
**Post-production
Co-ordinators**
Audrey Dawson
Sarah Caraher
Researchers
Hannah Smolenska
Sheena O'Byrne
Re-recording Mixer
John Fitzgerald
Sound Editors
Michael McCormack
Aza Hand

WITH

Leah Holohan
Grace McGee
Eimear Peters
Chloe O'Connor
Emily Rose McHugh
Emma Quinn
Katie Gilligan
Maria O'Donohue
Chantelle Monaghan
Jess Nolan
Siofra MacNamara
Laura Dixon
Eileen Brennan
Kim Jackman
Sonia Leavy
Shauna Doherty
Joanne Holohan
Eimer Kavanagh
Tracy Murray
Mary Jo McDonnell
Lorraine Boyhan
Miriam Gunn
Bernie Leijen
Tara Kelly
Nessa Robins
Marilyn Peters
Elaine Kelly

Sheena O'Loughlin
Theresa Russell
Nuala McGowan
Vera Heffeman
Joan Leavy
Philomena Duffy
Leila Brady
Geraldine Igoe
Angela Smyth
Eileen Fisher
Eileen Dixon
Fionnuala Galvin
Monica Morris
Liz O'Rourke
Eilish Beglan
Christine Moran
Marion Davis
Mary Jo Needham
Julie Gargan
Patricia Brady
Mary Heneghan
Mary Butler
Maura Heaney
Mildred Ward
Frances Khouri
Mary Harton
Celia White
Mary Rock
Noeleen Pearle
Ethel Wardrop
Pauline Downey
Kathleen Egan
Ann Tobin
Kitty O'Connor
Mary Hanrahan
Cecilia McGarry
Catherine Rhatigan
Kathleen Holmes
Teresa Glynn
Agie Nutton
Audrey O'Brien

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Element Pictures
Distribution

7488 ft +0 frames



Kitchen stories: 'His & Hers'

I Am Number Four

USA/India 2011

Director: D.J. Caruso

With Alex Pettyfer, Timothy Olyphant, Teresa Palmer

Certificate 12A 109m 32s

With fantasy genre piece *I Am Number Four*, there's a temptation to let the real-life backstory write the review. The source book, published last year, was a pedestrian tale about an alien boy on Earth, pursued by the evil destroyers of his planet. The novel was credited to 'Pittacus Lore', but it soon emerged that its co-creator was James Frey, infamous in America for writing a bestselling memoir, *A Million Little Pieces*, whose authenticity has been hotly contested. It was also reported that *I Am Number Four*, the first of a planned six-book series, was the product of Frey's writers' factory, with budding authors fleshing out commercial storylines.

There is indeed a synthetic feel to *Number Four*'s plot, which the film follows closely. It's been described as a successor to *Twilight*—teenage girl meets non-human boy—but the boy's viewpoint brings it closer to *Superman*. The teen hero (Alex Pettyfer) is more interested in the girl he meets at school than in his developing superpowers, though he has a race of genocidal aliens on his heels to speed him along (he is 'number four' on their target list). The film is two parts teenage outsidership to one part pyrotechnic action, the latter mostly kept back for the frenetic, fiery and enjoyable finale.

Director D.J. Caruso (*Disturbia*, *Eagle Eye*) and co-writers Alfred Gough and Miles Millar (the creators of *Smallville*) don't manage to transcend the material, but they present it rather well (Steven Spielberg was also involved in drafting the script). Pettyfer and love interest Dianna Agron (cheerleader Quinn in the TV series *Glee*) convey an awkward charm, not spontaneous but suitably wistful, especially when *Number Four* enjoys a supper with the girl's family.

The early scenes revolve around burning and discarding: *Number Four* is burned by scars every time one of his brethren die, and must burn his possessions and move on. There's a poignant moment when he's delighted to see his pictures on his girlfriend's website, only for them to be deleted by his sternly patriarchal guardian (Timothy Olyphant). Unlike *Superman*, *Number Four* isn't allowed a secret identity; to survive, he must have no identity at all.

Admittedly, these ideas aren't followed through in any depth, and the thin story's holes are highlighted by a terrible opening voiceover. The premise behind the title, that the hero's people must be killed in strict order, is comically contrived. Presumably it will be explained if there are any sequels, but that's another issue. Like many recent blockbuster films, *I Am Number Four* is a pilot for a franchise, competing before a gong-show audience that's wise to 'to be continued' non-endings after *The Golden*



Glow buddy glow: Dianna Agron, Alex Pettyfer

Compass and *The Last Airbender*. However big the opening weekend, word of mouth will soon get round that *Number Four* doesn't have a proper ending, which could curtail the box office and the story.

◆◆ Andrew Osmond

CREDITS

Directed by
D.J. Caruso
Produced by
Michael Bay
Screenplay
Alfred Gough
Miles Millar
Marti Noxon
Based on the novel by
Pittacus Lore
[i.e. James Frey, Jobie Hughes]
Director of Photography
Guillermo Navarro
Edited by
Jim Page
Vince Filippone
Production Designer
Tom Southwell
Music
Trevor Rabin

©DreamWorks II
Distribution Co., LLC
Production Companies
DreamWorks Pictures
and Reliance Big
Entertainment present a
Bay Films production
A D.J. Caruso film
With the support of The
Commonwealth of
Pennsylvania and The
Pennsylvania Film Office
Executive Producers
David Valdes
Chris Bender
J.C. Spink
Co-executive Producers
Langley Perer
Matthew Cohan
Associate Producers

Emily Berger
Lori J. Nelson
Unit Production Manager
Susan McNamara
Production Supervisor
Florida Unit:
Elayne Schneiderman
Schmidt
Production Co-ordinators
Kate Kelly
Florida Unit:
Eduardo Lytton
Production Controller
Jim Turner
Location Managers
Charles Harrington
Florida Unit:
Alejo Menendez
Post-production Supervisor
Robert Bella
Assistant Directors
1st: James M. Freitag
1st: Luc Etienne
2nd: Allen Kupetsky
Script
Jillian Giacomini
Casting
Deborah Aquila
Tricia Wood
Pittsburgh:
Donna Belajac
Florida Unit:
Ellen Jacoby
Underwater Director of Photography
Florida Unit:
Pete Romano
Aerial Directors of Photography
Michael Kelem
David B. Nowell
Camera Operators
A: David Crone
B: Joe Chess

Steadicam Operator

David Crone
Chief Lighting Technician
David Lee
Key Grip
Rick Stribling
Visual Effects Supervisor:
Greg McMurry
Producer:
Lori J. Nelson
Visual Effects/Animation
Industrial Light & Magic
Visual Effects by
Hammerhead
Productions Inc.
Shade VFX
Entity FX
DIVE
Pixel Playground, Inc.
Kaliber Visual Effects
Lola Visual Effects
Additional:
Base FX

Special Effects

Florida Unit Supervisor:
Kevin Harris
Co-ordinator:
Peter Chesney
Art Directors
Douglas Cumming
Gary Kosko
Florida Unit:
Paul D. Kelly
Set Designer
Draw Hittie
Set Decorator
Mara A. Nay
Artwork Provided by
Ray Turner
Property Master
David Gulick
Construction Co-ordinators
Buster Pile
Florida Unit:
James Harris
Costume Designer
Mane-Sylvie Deveau

Costume Supervisor
Deborah Cha Blewins
Department Head Make-up
Tarra Day
Make-up Artist
Rachel Kick
Special Make-up Designed/Created by
Greg Nicotero
Howard Berger
Creature Design by
Legacy Effects
Department Head Hair
Pierce Austin
Hair stylist
Nancy Keslar
Main Title/Main on End Titles Designed and Produced by
Prologue Films
Title Designer:
Danny Yount
End Titles
Scarlet Letters
Orchestra Conductors
Gordon Goodwin
Don Harper
Orchestrations by
Gordon Goodwin
Trevor Rabin
Music Supervisor
Jennifer Hawks
Soundtrack
"Radioactive" – Kings of Leon; "Tighten Up" – The Black Keys; "Rolling in the Deep" – Adele; "Somebody's Watching Me" – Rockwell; Michael Jackson: "Shelter" – The xx; "Soldier On" – The Temper Trap; "Invented" – Jimmy Eat World; "Curfew" – Beck; "As She's Walking Away" – The Zac Brown Band featuring Alan Jackson; "Letters from the Sky" – Civil Twilight
Production Sound Mixer
Jim Stuebe
Re-recording Mixers
Michael Minkler
Tony Lambert
Christian Minkler
Supervising Sound Editors
Karen Baker Landers
Per Hallberg
Stunt Co-ordinator
Brad Allan
Fight Co-ordinator
Peng Zhang

CAST

Alex Pettyfer
John Smith, Number Four
Timothy Olyphant
Henri
Teresa Palmer
Number 6

Dianna Agron
Sarah
Callan McAuliffe
Sam
Kevin Durand
Mogadorian commander
Jake Abel
Mark
Jeff Hochendoner
Sheriff James
Patrick Sebes
Kevin
Greg Townley
Number 3
Reuben Langdon
Number 3's guardian
Emily Wickersham
Nicole
Molly McGinnis
receptionist
Brian Howe
Frank
Andrew Owen
Bret
Sophia Caruso
girl on street
Charles Carroll
Sam's stepdad
L. Derek Leonidoff
Mr Berhman
Garrett M. Brown
Mr Simms
Sabrina De Matteo
physics teacher
Cooper Thornton
Sarah's dad
Judith Hoag
Sarah's mom
Jack Walz
Sarah's brother
Bill Laing
demented farmer
Beau Mirchoff
Drew
Cody Johns
Kern
Isabella Robbins
teen at party
Damien Walters
Jon Braver
Kevin Cassidy
Nash Edgerton
Matt Leonard
Carrick O'Quinn
Timothy Stitz
Steve Upton
Mogs

Dolby Digital/DTS/SDS
In Colour
Prints by
DeLuxe

Distributor
Buena Vista
International (UK)

9,858 ft +0 frames

SYNOPSIS John Smith resembles a normal teenager but in fact is one of nine survivors from the planet Lorien who fled to Earth with their warrior guardians when their planet was conquered by Mogadorians. The Mogadorians are now hunting them down one by one: they kill Number Three in Kenya; John is Number Four, the next in line.

Henri, John's guardian, takes him to Paradise, Ohio. Enrolling at the local school, John is beguiled by Sarah, a budding photographer, and takes the side of school geek Sam against Sarah's ex, Mark. He develops unearthly powers, his 'legacies' from Lorien, which include tremendous agility and psychokinesis. Mark's gang attacks John at the town's spring fair. John fights them off, but his glowing hands are seen by Sam, whose father (now vanished) was obsessed with UFOs. John reluctantly admits that he's an alien.

Henri finds pictures of John on a conspiracy website, and insists he leave Paradise. John defies him, not wanting to leave Sarah. When Henri seeks out the website's creators, he is captured by Mogadorians. John and Sam follow; John fights the Mogadorians. Henri is fatally wounded.

Resolving to leave Paradise, John visits Sarah to say goodbye, but the police pursue them – the Mogadorians have framed John as a terrorist. The Mogadorians are finally destroyed in an epic battle, in which John is helped by the arrival of the super-powered Number Six and a shape-shifting 'chimera' that has been watching over him. John and Number Six resolve to find the other Lorien survivors. Promising Sarah he'll return, John sets out with Sam, who's searching for his father.



NEWLY RESTORED

'One of the most
frightening of all films'

DAVID THOMSON

LES DIABOLIQUES

Simone Signoret Véra Clouzot Paul Meurisse Charles Vanel

12
(TBC)

Directed by Henri-Georges Clouzot

In cinemas 18 March 2011

BFI Southbank
020 7928 3232

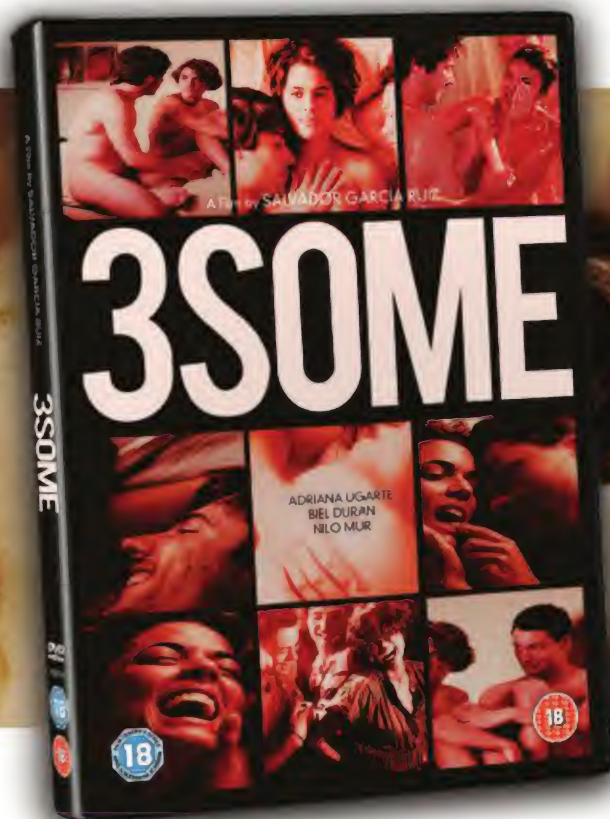
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Ironclad

Germany/USA/
United Kingdom 2010
Director: Jonathan English
With James Purefoy, Brian Cox,
Derek Jacobi, Kate Mara
Certificate 15 120m 38s

Brawny Danish mercenary Tiberius surely voices what the audience is thinking when he says, "Why can't we just go round it?" He refers to Rochester Castle, which stands between his band of fearsome warriors in the pay of King John and the London of 1215, which is hardly poised for an attack anyway, given that John has just signed the proto-civil-rights treaty Magna Carta. The battlements of Rochester are manned by fewer than two dozen defenders, and though this seems an easy conquest, it's still a puzzle why Paul Giamatti's John doesn't simply give the place a wide berth and take a more circuitous route towards the wide-open capital. The answer, of course, is that if he did so, then we'd be without this formular celluloid tale of heroic defiance, which offers generous amounts of axe-wielding carnage and a pleasingly old-fashioned sense of craftsmanship as the battle rages in, around, over and under a convincing replica castle rigged up by the production team in rural Wales.

It's certainly debatable whether what's at stake when church and nobility stand up to duplicitous King John's attempt to retake power after reluctantly signing the Magna Carta could be termed 'freedom', given the democratic associations the word has for modern viewers. Still, at least it gives the crisply aphoristic dialogue a few worthwhile notions on which to hang all the medieval slice-and-dicery. While Giamatti's full-on turn as the rogue monarch is the key attraction here – including one hissy fit defending the divine right of kings which is a feat of sheer untinged gusto – director Jonathan English and his stunt crew give the physicality of the fight scenes genuine heft, refreshingly so when onscreen mayhem these days can often amount to little more than unconvincing washes of CGI decoration.

While the initial assault by the king's forces is certainly bracing, with much lethal swinging of long swords

on the battlements, the film then goes on to prove that more is definitely less, since the subsequent waves of pretty much the same thing decrease in impact as they go along. Leading man James Purefoy – whose Knight Templar's vow of chastity is teased at dismayingly overextended length by the lady of the manor – provides a bit of El Cid-style derring-do when he rides full throttle into the thronging enemy hordes, but by the time he rouses himself for a climactic bout against Vladimir Kulich's aforementioned Danish hard man, it's difficult for the film to generate any mythic traction from yet another flashing blade and swinging hatchet. Moreover, Purefoy's centre-stage dilemma over squaring his religious principles with a life of violence feels especially second-hand for anyone who's seen him in the fresher and more effective *Solomon Kane*.

A shame that the often impressive staging isn't at the service of a more compelling storyline, but the film's determination to match crunching action with a modicum of moral intelligence certainly deserves a nod of respect. ➡ **Trevor Johnston**

CREDITS

Directed by Jonathan English
Produced by Rick Benattar
Andrew Curtis
Jonathan English
Screenplay Stephen McDool
Jonathan English
Erick Kastel
Director of Photography David Eggby
Editor Peter Amundson
Production Designer Joseph Nemeš III
Music by/Orchestra Conductor Lorne Balfé

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GmbH & Co. KG
Production Companies A VIP Medienfonds 4
production in association with Rising Star, Silver Reel, Premiere Picture, the Wales Creative IP Fund, ContentFilm International and Molinare
Perpetual Media Capital presents a Mythic International Entertainment production

A Jonathan English film
With the support of
Finance Wales and the
Wales Creative IP Fund
Executive Producers Steve Robbins
Alastair Burlingham
Christian Arnold-Beutel
Marcus Schoefer
Tilo Seiffert
Glenn Kendrick
Ackermann
Jamie Carmichael
Graham Begg
Uwe R. Feuersenger
Linda James
Bethan Cousins
Mark Foligno
Deepak Sikka
John Evangelides
Evan Astrowsky
David Rogers
Adam Bettenedge
James Gibb
Co-executive Producer Al Munteanu
Line Producer Andrew Warren
Associate Producers Brian Brightly
Robyn Owen
Production Manager Merrin Stoutt
Production Co-ordinator Stacey Burns
Production Accountant Christian Holden
Location Managers Clive Evans
2nd Unit:

Bryan Moses
Post-production Supervisor Michael Solinger
2nd Unit Director Chris Forster
Assistant Directors 1st: Phil Booth
2nd: Harriet Worth
2nd: Roger Thomas
2nd Unit 1st: Robert Grayson
2nd: Lisa Skelding
Script Supervisors Yasmin Rais
2nd Unit: Ceri Evans-Cooper
Casting Director Kelly Valentine Hendry
US: Robyn Owen
Camera Operator/Steadicam Florian Emmerich
Camera Operators Botond Aszalos
2nd Unit: Dean Thompson
Gaffers Peter Sidlo
Chris Davies
2nd Unit: Llyr Evans
Key Grips Attila Szucs
2nd Unit: James Holloway
Visual Effects Supervisor David Kuklish
Producer: Tim Field
Visual Effects by Molinare
Pixion
LipSync Post
Lola Post Production
Limited
Additional: WebVFX
Special Effects Supervisor Richard Van Den Bergh
Co-ordinator: Ceri Hughes
Miniatures Artem
Supervisor: Mike Kelt
Film Editor Gavin Buckley
Supervising Art Director Malcolm Stone
Art Director Hayden Pearce
Set Decorator Peter Walpole
Props Master Ty Teiger
Construction Manager Tony Graysmark
Costume Designer Beatrice Aruna Pasztor
Costume Supervisor Annie Crawford
Wardrobe Master Kevin Pratten
Make-up Designer Jacqueline Fowler
Make-up Artists Helen Speyer
Su Westwood
Loz Schiavo
Body Make-up Jacqueline Russon
Special Make-up Effects Designer Paul Hyett
Hair Stylist/Wig Maker Tina French
Hair Dressers Gilly Rees
Alison Sing
Tiggy Tucker
Sarah-Jane Marks
Lesley Smith
Carol Robinson
Julie Davies
2nd Unit: Tilly Rees
Tiggy Tucker
Carnyx Soloist John Kenny

Solo Cello Tina Guo
Tenor Solo Jonathan Cooke
Soprano Solo Rachel McDonald
King John Theme Vocals Paul Brady
Choir Conductor Csaba Somos
Supervising Orchestrator Bruce L. Fowler
Music Supervisor Alison Wright
Music Producers Lorne Balfé
Alan Meyerson
Supervising Sound Designer Jeremy Price
Andy Kennedy
Sound Mixers Richard Dyer
2nd Unit: Gareth Meirion Thomas
Re-recording Mixers Mike Prestwood Smith
Vincent Cosson
Stunt Co-ordinators Richard Ryan
Bela Unger

CAST

James Purefoy Marshal
Brian Cox Baron Albany
Derek Jacobi Lord Reginald de Cornhill
Kate Mara Lady Isabel
Paul Giamatti King John
Jason Flemyng Becket
Jamie Foreman Coterel
Aneurin Barnard Guy
Mackenzie Crook Marks
Vladimir Kulich Tiberius
Charles Dance Archbishop Langton
Rhys Parry Jones Wulfstan
Annabelle Apsion Maddy
Bree Condon Agnes
Daniel O'Meara Phipps
David Melville Baron Damay
Guy Siner Oaks
Steffan Rhodri Cooper
William Hoyland Abbot Marcus
John Pierce Jones cook
Jeff Jones head clerk
Ceri Mears blacksmith
Kenneth Collard sapper captain
Wyn Bowen Harries Dewi Rhys Williams
barons
John Weldon Castle Damay sentry
Laura Sibbick castle servant girl

Dolby Digital/DTS Colour by DeLuxe [2.35:1]

Distributor Warner Bros.
Entertainment UK Ltd

10,856 ft +9 frames

Just Go with It

USA 2011
Director: Dennis Dugan
With Adam Sandler,
Jennifer Aniston, Nick Swardson
Certificate 12A 116m 22s

The first rule of improv, according to Maggie (Bailee Madison), a little girl with a penchant for amateur dramatics (and cinema's worst fake cockney accent since Dick Van Dyke starred in *Mary Poppins*), is this: "If someone says something, just go with it – no negation."

She is explaining to her brother Michael (Griffin Gluck), their mother Katherine (Jennifer Aniston) and Katherine's longtime boss Danny (Adam Sandler) how best to carry off the pretence of being a family. Danny is no stranger to such masquerades. Committed only to his own bachelorhood, he has spent the past two decades wearing a wedding band as a lure for no-strings sex – until, that is, he meets the girl of his dreams, 23-year-old 'hottie' Palmer (*Sports Illustrated* covergirl Brooklyn Decker). When, however, Palmer discovers his ring, Danny and Katherine concoct a ruse to convince her that Danny is in fact a married man and a good father, now perfectly available since he is signing for an amicable divorce.

Maggie's words also supply this latest film from Adam Sandler's Happy Madison productions with its title, changed from *Pretend Wife* when Nicole Kidman joined the cast (as Katherine's old *bête noire* Devlin). Yet for all Maggie's stress on the liberating power of improvisation, there is little that doesn't seem calculated, or that has not been built on already over-familiar routines. Here we find such well-worn rom-com tropes as the fake couple who end up becoming a real couple (*Green Card* etc), the long-term friends who realise they make a perfect couple (*When Harry Met Sally* etc) and even a Cinderella-style makeover for Aniston (whose famous hair is apparently "neglected"), as well as that old comedic staple, the absurdly escalating deception. "Why don't you just tell the truth?" Maggie asks early on. If Danny did, there would be no film. But the lies that accumulate, especially when Danny's cousin Eddie (Nick Swardson) shows up claiming – without good reason – to be a German online "sheep shipper" named Dolph Lundgren, stretch plausibility to a point way beyond where Palmer, let alone any self-respecting viewer, could "just go with it".

If the plotting seems less impromptu than over-rehearsed, that's because this is a remake of Gene Saks's award-winning *Cactus Flower* (America's seventh highest-grossing film of 1970), adapted by I.A.L. Diamond from Abe Burrows's 1965 Broadway production of the same name, which was itself adapted from Pierre Barillet and Jean-Pierre Grédy's play *Fleur de cactus*. The story remains essentially the same, though added 'refinements' include the odd pop-cultural reference, some

SYNOPSIS England, 1215. King John, having been forced by his noblemen to sign Magna Carta, strikes back by landing an army of Danish mercenaries and marching on London. Marshal, a Knight Templar returned from the Crusades, witnesses the king's brutality; when Archbishop Langton asks Baron Albany to take Rochester Castle and halt John's advance, Marshal joins the fight.

Albany's men arrive at Rochester to find Lord Cornhill and his young wife Isabel hosting the king's advance party. Marshal and company – among them womanising Becket, archer Marks and idealistic squire Guy – kill the king's men. After frustrating the massed attackers' attempts to mount the castle walls, the defenders sustain losses as boulders and fireballs rain down. While Langton negotiates with the French, John's army breaches Rochester's outer walls, hacking Albany to death.

The remaining rebels are besieged for months in the central tower. Cornhill is driven to suicide. Eventually, John's engineers explode a mine and collapse the building; after the mercenaries pour in, Marshal bests their leader Tiberius in a duel, only for the French to arrive and save the day for the English nobles.

Marshal rides off to start a new life with Isabel. Defeated, John flees.

grossout humour and picturesque Hawaiian backdrops. Danny is now a plastic surgeon rather than a dentist, but even as the film ridicules his patients for their grotesquery and shallowness (as though these were somehow the same thing), it repeatedly exhibits both qualities itself.

Having directed Sandler five times before, Dennis Dugan knows exactly what the comedian's fans want from their Sandler vehicles. For everyone else, though, the pained, preternaturally whining laugh that comes from one of Danny's excessively nipped, tucked and Botoxed friends will encapsulate the natural response to this overwrought and largely botched farce. **Anton Bitel**

CREDITS

Directed by
Dennis Dugan
Produced by
Adam Sandler
Jack Giaraputo
Heather Parry
Screenplay
Allan Loeb
Timothy Dowling
Based on *Cactus Flower*,
screenplay by I.A.L.
Diamond, stage play by
Abe Burrows
Based upon a French
play [*Fleur de cactus*] by
[Pierre] Barillet and
[Jean-Pierre] Grédy
Director of
Photography
Theo Van de Sande
Editor
Tom Costain
Production Designer
Perry Andelin Blake
Music
Rupert Gregson-Williams

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Industries, Inc. and
Beverly Blvd LLC
Production Companies
Columbia Pictures
presents a Happy
Madison production
A film by Dennis Dugan
Executive Producers
Barry Bernardi
Allen Covert
Tim Herlihy
Steve Koren
Co-producer
Kevin Grady

Associate Producer/
Unit Production
Manager
Daryl Kass
Production
Co-ordinators
Marco Rosenberg
Hawaii Unit:
Nicole K.L.N. Ebeo
Production Accountant
Whitney Lucci
Location Managers
Robert S. Frank
Hawaii Unit:
Glenn Beadles
Post-production
Supervisor
Patsy Bougé
Assistant Directors
1st: Daniel Silverberg
2nd: Conte Matal
Script Supervisor
Ronit Ravich-Boss
Casting
Roger Mussenden
Jeremy Rich
Camera Operators
A: Candide Franklyn
B: Stephen Andrich
Chief Lighting
Technician
James Crawford
Key Grip
Jack Chouchanian
Visual Effects/
Animation
Atomic Fiction, Inc.
Sony Pictures
Imageworks Inc.
Visual Effects
Zoic Studios
Special Effects
Co-ordinator
Larz Anderson
Art Director
Alan Au

SYNOPSIS Left heartbroken at his own wedding, Danny discovers the power a wedding ring has to attract women looking for no-strings sex. Twenty years later, and now a plastic surgeon, Danny regularly uses the ring as a pick-up aid. After sex on the beach with 23-year-old Palmer, however, he decides that she's the one. When Palmer spots the ring, Danny's assistant Katherine (a single mother with two children, Michael and Maggie) agrees to pretend to be the wife he is about to divorce. Palmer insists on first meeting Katherine, who she thinks is called Devlin (in fact the name of Katherine's nemesis from college), and then the children. Michael exploits the situation to blackmail Danny into taking everyone on holiday to Hawaii, where they are joined by Danny's cousin Eddie, who pretends to be Katherine's lover. Danny hopes to propose to Palmer during the holiday. By chance, the real Devlin is staying at the same resort with her wealthy husband Ian, and Katherine's abiding sense of rivalry leads to a deception of her own: she pretends that Danny is her loving husband. One evening, as Danny and Katherine join Devlin and Ian at a couples' dinner, Danny realises that he is in love with Katherine. That night Palmer suggests that she and Danny wed the very next day – but Danny marries Katherine instead.

Set Designers
John Berger
Lawrence A. Hubbs
Set Decorator
Claire Kaufman
Property Master
Tim Wiles
Construction
Co-ordinator
Dave DeGaetano
Costume Designer
Ellen Lutter
Costume Supervisor
Valerie Zielonka
Make-up Department
Head
Ann Pala
Key Make-up Artist
Conna C. Duran
Special Effects
Make-up
Kazuhiro Tsuji
Hair Department Head
Thomas Real
Key Hair Stylist
Nanxy Tong-Heater
Titles
Framework Studio LA
Orchestrations
Alastair King
Music Supervision
Michael Dilbeck
Brooks Arthur
Kevin Grady
Soundtrack
"So Lonely"; "Roxanne";
"Driven to Tears"; "Canary
in a Coalmine"; "Can't
Stand Losing You"; "Love
Is the Seventh Wave";
"Next to You" – The
Police; "Blue Grass" –
Peter "Peas" McEvilly;
"Fire Burning" – Sean
Kingston; "Can't Catch
My Breath"; "Duppy Can't

Frighten Me" – Peas
featuring Daddy Roots;
"Nothin' on You" – B.o.B.
featuring Bruno Mars;
"Cooler Than Me" – Mike
Posner; "Umbrella";
"Tenderness (Party Ben
Mash-up)"; "Umbrella" –
Rihanna featuring JAY-Z;
"Tenderness" – General
Public; "When You've
Had Enough" – Ron
Ermini and Friends;
"Roxanne/You Should be
Dancing (DJ Lobsterdust
Mash-up)"; "You Should
Be Dancing" – Bee Gees;
"Incomplete without You"
– The After Hours;
"Wally's Waltz" – Geoff
Spencer; "Hawaii" – The
Beach Boys; "Piano
Man"; "Tainted Love/Is
This Love (DJ
Lobsterdust Mash-up)";
"Tainted Love" – Soft Cell;
"Is This Love" – Bob
Marley & The Wailers; "Le
O Le Tapalua Mo Le Siva
Afi"; "Bibi Na Se Ni
Do/Tevovo Tevovo" –
Tihati Productions, Ltd.;
"My Sweetheart"; "Aloha
ia o Waianae" – Ledward
Kaapana; "Angel" – Jake
Shimabukuro;
"Beggin'/Can't Stand
Losing You (DJ Y alias JY
Mash-up)"; "Beggin'" –
Madcon; "Fishing for
Love" – The Hawaiian
Beach Band; "Stars in the
Morning Sky"; "He'eia" –
HAPA; "Bye Bye Bye" –
"NSYNC; "O Fortuna"
from "Carmina Burana"

by Carl Orff – Figuralchor
Frankfurt, Frankfurter
Singakademie, the Royal
Flemish Philharmonic of
Antwerp; "The
Dancefloor" – Eklou;
"Lovely Hula Hands" –
HAPA, Ledward
Kaapana; "Kaulana O
Hilo Hanakahi" – Herb
Ohta Jr.; "Lovely Hula
Hands" – The All-Star
Hawaiian Band; "Lovely
Than You" – B.o.B.;
"Every Breath You
Take/Chasing Cars
(Party Ben Mash-up)";
"Every Breath You Take"
– (1) The Police, (2) –
Jake Shimabukuro;
"Chasing Cars" – Snow
Patrol; "You Still Touch
Me" – Sting; "Waiting in
Vain" – Annie Lennox; "It
Must Be Love" – Chuck &
The Jam Band
Production Mixer
Richard Kite
Re-recording Mixers
Tateum Kohut
Greg Orloff
Supervising Sound
Editor
Elmo Weber
Stunt Co-ordinator
Scott Rogers

Gene Pompa
delivery guy
Mario Joyner
Henderson
Keegan Michael Key
Emesto
Heidi Montag
Adon's wife
Andy Roddick
good-looking guy on
plane
Jillian Nelson
young college girl
Lilian Tapia
Rosa
Azer Greco
Silas
Lori Heuring
salesgirl
Darrin Lackey
waiter
Julie Dixon Jackson
Mrs Harrington
Branscombe Richmond
bartender
Aaron Zachary Phillips
fat kid
Jessica Jade Andres
teenage girl at dive
restaurant
Kent Avenido
guy at dive restaurant
Rachel Specter
Lisa Hammond
Tia Van Berg
scary woman
Todd Sherry
check-in clerk
Brendon Eggertsen
Ariel
Andrew Tomoso
rope-bridge guy
Lila Titone
Sadie Sandler
Sunny Sandler
Hawaiian family at rope
bridge
Lorna Scott
Big Country
Newton Deleon
diner at dive restaurant
Teresa Ann Zantua
Hawaiian Rosa
Roger Parham-Brown
Pizza Hut janitor
Tom Dill
Coach Dill
Vanessa Villalobos
saleswoman
Cort Rogers
tripping kid
Sharon Ferguson
pregnant woman at
McFunnigans
Sheroum Kim
waitress
Jevon Scott
Brandon Force
Samuel Nims
Elijah Scholer
sailors

CAST

Adam Sandler
Danny Maccabee
Jennifer Aniston
Katherine
Nick Swardson
Eddie
Brooklyn Decker
Palmer Dodge
Dave Matthews
Ian Maxtone Jones
Bailee Madison
Maggie
Kevin Nealon
Adon
Griffin Gluck
Michael
Nicole Kidman
Devlin Adams
Rachel Dratch
Kirsten Brant
Allen Covert
Soul Patch
Dan Patrick
Tanner Patrick
Minka Kelly
Joanna Damon
Jackie Sandler
Veruca
Rakefet Abergel
Patricia
Dana Min Goodman
Julia Wolov
Colby Kline
Jana Sandler
bridesmaids
Jonathan Loughran
pick-up guy 1
Peter Dante
pick-up guy 2
Michael Laskin
Mr Maccabee
Carol Ann Susi
Mrs Maccabee

Justin Bieber Never Say Never

USA 2011

Director: Jon M. Chu

Certificate U 104m 59s

It's hard to believe that a 3D film about Justin Bieber is possible, so 2D and cartoon-like is his image as a global teen-pop idol – more manga than human. But director Jon Chu (*Step Up 3D*) has made the attempt with concert-film-cum-biopic *Justin Bieber: Never Say Never*. Chu knows how to choreograph a concert film, and he swoops in and out of the depths of Madison Square Garden with skill. But the 3D effects are uneven, and sometimes odd, with Chu clearly under orders to put Bieber so close to the viewer that he feels almost tangible. In a medium shot of the singer on stage he might be brought further forward than his immediate surroundings, so the eye perceives him as closer, yet scaled down – as if he's a homunculus or oversized action figure.

Never Say Never borrows more naturally from the playbook of reality TV and its illusion of unvarnished access. We see Bieber's manager Scooter Braun finding ticketless fans outside venues, listening deadpan as they profess their love for Bieber, and finally pulling out tickets for front-row seats. There's also a subplot introduced hastily late on to give a sense of 'jeopardy' – will Justin's overworked and swollen vocal cords recover in time for the big concert? No spoilers here.

But *Never Say Never* never forgets that it is ultimately merchandise. Under the guise of 'candid', 'all-access' shooting, much of the film is pure salesmanship. Justin is told to tidy his room on a fleeting home visit (he's so normal!). His success is down to relentless touring and all-American hard work to overcome the odds (though the handling of his career by ultra-powerful and super-sharp music-industry figures such as Antonio 'L.A.' Reid and Usher Raymond may have had something to do with it). There's also a mantra-like emphasis on family and group prayer.

One thing its barrage of early home movies does establish though is that Bieber is a preternaturally gifted performer, who danced, sang, played guitar and drummed from early childhood. In the course of *Never Say Never* Bieber performs with artists such as Usher, Ludacris and Boyz II Men, but also with two teenagers, Jaden Smith and Miley Cyrus. On the surface this is straightforward businesslike cross-promotion, but it's notable that the only performers of Bieber's age to appear in the film have parents who are established stars themselves (Will Smith and Billy Ray Cyrus respectively). *Never Say Never* insists that anything is possible if you work hard enough, with Bieber as its Exhibit A. Its cast list does make it clear, however, that being born into the industry makes it a whole lot easier. **Sam Davies**



Circle of deceit: Jennifer Aniston, Adam Sandler, Brooklyn Decker



About a boy: Justin Bieber

CREDITS

Directed by Jon M. Chu
Produced by Scooter Braun, Justin Bieber, Antonio "L.A." Reid, Usher Raymond IV, Dan Cutforth, Jane Lipsitz
Director of Photography Reed Smoot
Edited by Avi Youabian, Jay Cassidy, Jillian Moul
Art Director Stephen Carter
Original Score Deborah Lurie

©Paramount Pictures Corporation
Production Companies Paramount Pictures presents a Scooter Braun Films production An L.A. Reid Media production in association with AEG Live

Executive Producers David Nicksay, Randy Phillips, Doug Merrifield
Co-producer Jonathan McHugh
Associate Producer Archie Gips
Unit Production Managers Doug Merrifield, David Nicksay

Production Supervisor Robert Mazaraki
Production Co-ordinator Olivier Amesien
Production Accountants James Hinton, Mark Mayer

Location Manager Guy Elrat
Post-production Supervisor Tricia Miles Tharp
Production Consultant Charles Oliver
Assistant Directors 1st: David H. Venghaus Jr, 2nd: Jeffrey Schwartz
Script Supervisor Melinda Taksen
Stereographer Vincent Pace

Aerial Director of Photography Brian Heller
Camera Operators Mitchell Amundsen, Rodney Taylor, Tom Lappin, Chris Norr, Richard Westlein, Stephen Kazmierski, Jack Donnelly, Joseph Guidry, Peter J. Babington, Theresa Vitale, David Heide, Andrew Waruszewski, Nick Franco
Steadicam Operators Kyle Rudolph, Dave Thompson
Chief Lighting Technicians Andy Ryan, Rocco Palmieri

1st Company Grip John M. Finnerty
Property Master Jeff Mazzola
Costumes for 3D Kurt & Bart
Make-up Artist Tania Ribalow
Hairstylist Daisy Curbeon

Main Title Sequence Ant Farm
End Titles Scarlet Letters
Music Score Orchestrated by Abraham Libbos
Music Supervisor Kuk Harrell
Soundtrack "With You", "Love Me (Lovefool)", "Bigger", "Baby", "Refine Me", "Undo Me", "3 AM", "Fallin'", "Respect", "So Sick of Love Songs", "Runaway Love", "U Got It Bad", "I'll Be", "Bootylicious", "Common Denominator", "One Time", "That Should Be Me", "One Less Lonely Girl", "Never Let You Go", "Down to Earth", "Born to Be Somebody" – Justin Bieber; "O Canada" – Jonathan Sadow; "Happy Birthday to You"; "Mercy Mercy Mercy"; "U Smile" – Justin Bieber; "Boyz II Men"; "Enie Meenie" – Justin Bieber; Sean Kingston; "Jump Start" – Noah Lebanon; "At Last" – Etta James; "In the Hall of the Mountain King" by Edvard Grieg – Kevin McKeever; "Somebody to Love" – Justin Bieber; Usher; "Never Say Never" – Justin Bieber; Miley Cyrus; "Zero Days" – Joshua Bass, Isaac Hasson; "Baby" – Justin Bieber, Ludacris

Choreography Jamaica Craft
Sound Designer Tim Chau
Sound Mixers John D. McCormick, Joshua Anderson, Michael Froberg, Paul Reed, L. Wyatt Tyzo
Re-recording Mixers David E. Fluhr, Tim Chau
Supervising Sound Editor Tim Chau

Reginald Jones keyboards
Taylor James DJ
Robert Baldwin Jr drums
Daniel Kanter Thomas Martin musical supervisors/
guitar
Bernard Harvey bass
Dominic Manuel Delfin Lazaro II
Christopher Abad Micah Tolentino background vocalists
Marvin Millora dance captain
Anthony Carr Anis Cheurfa
Nicholas DeMoura Aja George
Antonio Hudnell Raymond Mora
Jeremy Marinas Jonathan Perez
Straphano Solomon Michael Vargas dancers
Al Cerullo helicopter pilot

Justin Bieber – My World Tour Live Concert Design/Production Tom E. Marzullo
Road Manager TC Carter
Pyrotechnic Effects/Lasers Strictly FX
Flying Effects Eric Pearce
Brian White Brian Lolly

WITH

Justin Bieber
 Boyz II Men
 Miley Cyrus
 Sean Kingston
 Ludacris
 Jaden Smith
 Usher
 Pattie Mallette
 Diane Dale
 Bruce Dale
 Ryan Good
 Allison Kaye
 Carin Morris
 Scrapy Stassen
 Kenny Hamilton
 Scooter Braun
 Mama Jan Smith
 Jeremy Bieber
 L.A. Reid
 Randy Phillips
 Snoop Dogg themselves

Killing Bono

United Kingdom 2010

Director: Nick Hamm

With Ben Barnes, Robert Sheehan, Krysten Ritter, Martin McCann

Certificate 15 113m 48s

Let's be straight from the off – anyone hoping to see the eponymous antagonist of *Killing Bono* bite the bullet is going to be disappointed. 'Being Generally Irritated with Bono' might be a more apposite title for Nick Hamm's *Spinal Tap* take-off but even that's not a sentiment the film really shares. For the man otherwise known as Paul Hewson emerges as a rather saintly (if admittedly sanctimonious) figure – benign, resigned and ever forgiving of those who would topple him from his throne.

With U2's music providing a constant backdrop to the action, this adaptation of *Telegraph* rock critic Neil McCormick's memoir is more one for the lovers than the haters, as much a paean to the man himself as to the late 1970s and early 1980s, beautifully evoked in a desaturated palette of oranges, browns, reds and blacks. McCormick, a former schoolmate of Bono's, contends that the U2 frontman stole his destiny by pipping him to the post as singer in a band set up by one Larry Mullen Jr. The film charts that band's seemingly effortless rise to the status of rock legends alongside McCormick's own floundering music career, seemingly stalled at every turn by the better man, most amusingly when McCormick finally scores a major gig only to discover that Live Aid is scheduled for the same night.

McCormick's bad luck results from a combination of hubris and hamartia. This is a man virtually incapable of making a good decision, who turns down Bono's repeated offers of help, sleeps with his boss's wife and ruins his brother Ivan's career. Played with extreme camp by Ben Barnes, he's a curious figure, an asexual rock god who skitters through various incarnations with little sense of self – one minute he's a punk, the next a Roxy Music wannabe. At times he seems driven by narcissism, at others there's the slightest flicker of a homoerotic subtext, as when, while capitalising on the benefits of groupies, he finds himself staring straight into the eyes of his nemesis, whose face is blown up to epic proportions on the bedroom wall.

Sharing its hero's identity crisis, the film can't quite settle on a tone. While there's genuine pathos in McCormick's relationship with the long-suffering Ivan (Robert Sheehan from TV's *Misfits*, putting in a promising turn), it sits awkwardly with the band's slapstick misadventures on the London pop scene and the more gentle humour of the Dublin-set episodes. It's all likeable enough but hardly a fitting outlet for the last performance of the wonderful Pete Postlethwaite. His role was severely cut due to illness but he still stands head and shoulders above the rest of the cast.

► Catherine Wheatley

CREDITS

Directed by Nick Hamm
Produced by Ian Flook, Nick Hamm, Mark Huffman, Piers Tempest
Written by Dick Clement, Ian La Frenais, Simon Maxwell
 Adapted from the book *I Was Bono's Doppelgänger* by Neil McCormick
Director of Photography Kieran McGuigan
Editor Bill Sneddon
Production Designer Tom McCullagh
Original Score Stephen Warbeck

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Production Companies Greenroom Entertainment presents with Wasted Talent, The Salt Company, Generator Entertainment in association with Isotope Films, Matador Pictures, Cinema Three, Regent Capital, Molinare, Silver Reel, Sony Music Entertainment UK and Northern Ireland Screen
 A Nick Hamm film
 Development financing provided by Tempo Productions
 Developed with the assistance of Channel Four
 Made with the assistance of Northern Ireland Screen

Executive Producers Nigel Thomas, Charlotte Walls, Russell Allen, Simon Bosanquet, Mark Foligno, Jon Hamm, Tommy Moran, Samantha Horley, Cyril Mégret, Robert Bevan, Deepak Sikka, Ian Hutchinson, Nicholas Myers, Simon Maxwell, Jacqui Kerr-Dineen, Paul Curran

Co-executive Producers Andrew Barratt, Oliver Edwards, Michael Kerr-Dineen, Pia Le Gallais, Aidan Elliott
Co-producer Isabel Ballance

Associate Producers Comelia Durrant, James Higginson
Unit Production Manager Donald Sabourin
Production Co-ordinator Lisa Byrne

Production Accountant Rory McDermott
Location Managers Andrew Wilson
 2nd Unit: Grant Bobbett
Post-production Supervisor Helen de Winter
 2nd Unit Director Phil Crothers
Assistant Directors 1st: Raymond Kirk, 2nd: Ciara Tinney
Script Supervisor Lynda Marshall

Casting

Lucy Bevan
 Kelly Valentine Hendry
Additional Writing Ben Bond
A Camera/Steadicam Sean Savage
Camera Operators 2nd Unit: Mark Garrett, Dee Elliott
Gaffer Brian Livingstone
Key Grip Pat Garrett
Visual Effects Supervisor Simon Carr
Art Director Mark Lowry
Set Decorator Shane Bunting
Props Master Paul Stewart
Costume Designer Lorna Marie Mugan
Costume Supervisor Cathy Young
Make-up/Hair Designer Konnie Daniel
Make-up/Hair Artists Liz Boston, Loz Schiavo, Sian Wilson
Titles Designed by Moroco
Original Songs Composed and Performed by: Joe Echo, Sung by: Ben Barnes, Robert Sheehan, Martin McCann
 Produced by: Joe Echo
 Michael Keeney
Additional Songs Written by: Barbara J. Hunt, Ed Kowalczyk
Studio Musicians Guitars/Vocals: Joe Echo
 Keyboards: Michael Keeney
 Drums: Paul Hamilton, Marko Sakamoto
 Bass: Carl Harvey
Music Supervisor Tarquin Gotch
Soundtrack "Gimme Some Skin", "Street Mission" – The Hype; Martin McCann; "Do Anything You Wanna Do" – Ben Barnes, The Undertakers; "Stabat Mater" by John Browne; "Sleepwalking" – Some Kind of Lovin' – Ben Barnes, Yeah! Yeah!; "Better Way", "On My Own", "Play Dead", "Cry Baby", "Where We Want to Be", "Kicking Off Again" – Ben Barnes, Shook Up!; "You Spin Me Round (Like a Record)" – Dead or Alive; "Planet Earth" – Duran Duran; "Great Beyond" – Robert Sheehan, Shook Up!; "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" – U2; "Love Never Dies" – Ben Barnes; "Great Beyond" – Ed Kowalczyk
On-set Music Adviser Joe Echo
Sound Supervisor Scott Jones
Sound Mixer Ronan Hill
Re-recording Mixer Scott Jones
Supervising Sound Editor Ian Wilson
Stunt Co-ordinator Robert Inch

SYNOPSIS A concert documentary following 16-year-old Canadian pop star Justin Bieber in the build-up to a headlining concert at New York's Madison Square Garden. Interviews with Bieber's crew, management team, family and fans tell the story of his early years, adolescence and abrupt rise to superstardom. Intercut are performances taken from the Madison Square Garden show itself, filmed in 3D.

SYNOPSIS Dublin, 1976. At school, teenage brothers Neil and Ivan McCormick spot a sign-up sheet for a band. Neil is beaten to the position of frontman by classmate Paul Hewson. Paul tells Neil the band would like Ivan as second guitarist; Neil tells him not to make the offer since the McCormicks will be setting up their own band.

Hewson's band is soon signed up under the name U2. Hewson and bandmate Dave Evans change their names to Bono and the Edge and begin an almost immediate ascent to fame, while the McCormicks struggle to get gigs. Resentful, Neil turns down Bono's offer of setting the brothers up with a label and instead borrows money from gangster Danny Machin so that he and Ivan can move to London.

Over the next decade Neil and Ivan sink deeper into debt. Things take a turn for the better when Neil puts together a new band and persuades glamorous neighbour Gloria (with whom he begins a relationship) to manage them. After some strong-arming from Machin, record executive Hammond signs the boys as Shook Up. Ivan learns from a journalist that Neil prevented him joining U2, causing a rift between the brothers. Neil sleeps with Hammond's wife and is thrown out of the band.

In Dublin in 1987, Neil crashes the launch of U2's new album carrying a gun. He is intercepted by Ivan, who has persuaded Bono to let Shook Up open for U2 the following evening. The brothers are taken hostage by Machin, who wants his money back. They escape but fail to get to the gig in time.

Titles tell us that Neil married Gloria and became a journalist, while Ivan plays at weddings.

CAST

Ben Barnes
Neil McCormick
Robert Sheehan
Ivan McCormick
Krysten Ritter
Gloria
Peter Serafinowicz
Hammond
Stanley Townsend
Danny Machin
Martin McCann
Paul Hewson, 'Bono'
Pete Postlethwaite
Karl
Ralph Brown
Leo
Jason Byrne
hotel receptionist
Sam Corry
Paul McGuinness

Seán Doyle
Larry Mullen Jr
Sean Duggan
Liam
David Fennelly
Frankie
Mark Griffin
Dave Evans, 'The Edge'
Aoife Holton
Stella McCormick
Suzanna Hurst
launch party
doorwoman
Joni Kamen
Joss
Thomas Kelly
Hopeless Eric
Packy Lee
U2 security guard
James Lonergan
Keith

Lisa McAllister
Erika
Aidan McArdle
Bill McCormick
Martin McCloskey
Steve
Ivan McCormick
sleazy guy 1
Neil McCormick
sleazy guy 2
Frankie McGinty
Doug
Diarmuid Noyes
plugger
Hugh O'Connor
Gary
Deirdre O'Kane
Marlene McCormick
Luke Treadaway
Rick
David Tudor
Adam Clayton

Justine Waddell
Danielle
Slinky Winfield
Morgan

Dolby Digital
Colour/Prints by
DeLuxe

Distributor
Paramount Pictures UK

10,240 ft +0 frames

A Little Bit of Heaven

USA 2010

Director: Nicole Kassell

With Kate Hudson, Gael García Bernal, Rosemarie DeWitt

Certificate 12A 106m 28s

There's a delicate balance to be struck when treating terminal illness partly for laughs; recent efforts such as *The Bucket List*, *Funny People* and TV series *The Big C* have all had a go, with varying degrees of success. The bottom line perhaps is tact, the limits of which director Nicole Kassell controversially pushed hard against when she dared to sympathise with a paedophile in her first feature, *The Woodsman* (2004). Boundary-pushing is again the order of the day in her second film, *A Little Bit of Heaven*, in which we are introduced to successful advertising executive Marley (Kate Hudson), a high-spirited thirtysomething party girl whose dedication to pleasure and no-ties sex bespeaks a fear of commitment. When she's diagnosed with terminal colon cancer, her reaction (as with everything else) is joking herself away from confronting it.

In the film's first half, Marley responds clownishly to her "ass cancer", breaking the news to her friends over dinner, taking them on a shopping spree on her life insurance and starting a romance with her Mexican-Jewish doctor Julian Goldstein (played by a visibly uncomfortable Gael García Bernal). After a couple of sloppy scenes in which Marley visits a heaven where God is Whoopi Goldberg as herself (a cross between an agony aunt and a fairy godmother), the second 'redemptive' half of the film becomes a shamelessly emotional clockwork mechanism engineered to manipulate even a pet into weeping.

Like Marley herself, the film is unable to deal with its subject-matter other than in a patronising and/or offensively careless tone. The jokes are awkwardly timed and cringing, and pain and illness never look ugly – maybe just a bit paler, teary-eyed and with casual, loose-fitting clothes. But worst of all are the two-dimensional, lazily written clichés, which hit virtually every demographic by the book: white, black, gay, Hispanic, Jewish, artists, but all mainly young, and all sitting on the comfortable cushion of New Orleans' disaster-free



Kate Hudson, Gael García Bernal

middle classes – except for an über-suave dwarf escort whose sexual ability gains him the nickname that gives the film its title, thrown in for a laugh that never comes. After spending a few hours together on an impromptu date, Dr Goldstein comments to Marley: "I've never met anyone who talks so much and says so little". Ditto Kassell's film.

► Mar Diestro-Dópiro

CREDITS

Directed by
Nicole Kassell
Produced by
John Davis
Adam Schroeder
Mark Gill
Robert Katz
Written by
Gren Wells
Director of Photography
Russell L. Carpenter
Editor
Stephen A. Rotter
Production Designer
Stuart Wurtzel
Music
Heitor Pereira

©Earthbound Films, LLC
Production Companies
The Film Department
presents a David
Entertainment
production
A film by Nicole Kassell
Executive Producers
Neil Sacker
Michael Goguen

Michael J. Withenill
Skot Bright
Co-producers
Gren Wells
Ian Watermaier
Unit Production Managers
Kati Johnston
Additional Photography:
James Roque Jr
Production Co-ordinators
Kathy Chambliss Oliver
Additional Photography:
Jennifer Ray
Production Accountant
Sean Hogan
Location Manager
M. Gerard Sellers
Post-production Supervisor
Dan Genetti
2nd Unit Director
Aerial Unit:
Mat Beck
Assistant Directors
1st: Jon Mallard
2nd: James Roque Jr
Additional Photography
1st: James Roque Jr
Splitter Unit
1st: Caroline O'Brien



With or without you: Robert Sheehan

SYNOPSIS New Orleans, the present. Marley is a successful thirtysomething advertising executive enjoying single life to the full. She feels unwell and visits the doctor for some tests, during which she passes out and has a vision of heaven. God – in the shape of Whoopi Goldberg – tells her she's dying and grants her three wishes. Marley is diagnosed with terminal colon cancer. After a couple of unsuccessful treatments, Marley decides to stop them, but not before flirting with her doctor, Julian Goldstein. They begin a romance, until Marley, afraid of commitment because of childhood experiences with parents who hated each other, and unable to understand why Julian would want to be with a dying woman, tells him to go. Upset with herself, she argues with all her friends. She starts drinking and has a bike accident, prompting a second vision of heaven and another chat with God. When she regains consciousness she apologises to Julian, and with his help makes up with her friends and parents. She organises a riverside party for her funeral and, once dead, dances to the music with God on the opposite side of the river.

Key 2nd: Jared Hopkins
Script Supervisor
 Amy Sanderson
Casting
 Jeanne McCarthy
 Nicole Abellera
 New Orleans:
 Lisa Mae Finnannon
**A Camera Operator/
 Steadicam**
 Gregory Lundsgaard
Camera Operators
 B: Michael Applebaum
 B: Jerry M. Jacob
Splinter Unit
 Adam Ward
Steadicam Operator
 Larry McConkey
Gaffer
 Len Levine
Key Grip
 Richard Ball
Visual Effects
 Method
 Animal West
 Look Effects, Inc.
Special Effects
Co-ordinator
 David Nami
Art Director
 W. Steven Graham
Set Designer
 Will Eastin
Set Decorator
 Helen Britten
Property Master
 Michael Jortner
Construction
Co-ordinator
 Chuck Stringer
Costume Designer
 Ann Roth
Make-up Department
Head
 Tina Roesler Kerwin
Key Make-up Artist
 Carla Chao Brenholtz
Hair Department Head
 Anne Morgan
Key Hair Stylist
 Tony Ward
Main Titles/End Title
Sequence Designed by
 Picture Mill
Score Conducted by
 Nick Glennie-Smith
Orchestrations
 Ladd McIntosh
Soundtrack
 "Shine" – Laura Izibor;
 "Move That Thing" –
 TC Moses; "Song for
 Cara"; "Dues and
 Don'ts" – Gary
 Schreiner; "Here It Goes
 Again" – OK Go; "Buck
 Jumping"; "Nola Jump"
 – Ivan Neville, Ian
 Neville, Tony Hall,
 Raymond Weber;
 Shamarr Allen, Tom
 Fitzpatrick; "Funky
 Munky Biznis" – Jon
 Cleary; "Perfect Day" –
 The Seventeens; "Ay
 Valeria!" – Ricardo
 Lemvo; "Soiree" – Helen
 Jane Long; "Turn It
 Around"; "All the Way
 Up" – Miss Eighty6;
 "Pretty Girl" – Vincent
 Vincent and the Villains;
 "Two Beat or Not Two
 Beat"; "Montuno Uno" –
 P.O.E.; "Mercedes
 Benz"; "When the
 Saints Go Marching In";
 "A Closer Walk with
 Thee" – Ivan Neville, Ian
 Neville, Tony Hall,
 Raymond Weber;
 "Happy Weekday Blues";
 "Treme Second Line" –
 Kermit Ruffins; "Dirty
 Rice" – Phil Symonds;
 "Love Feelin'" – Aida;
 "Make Up of a Fool" –
 Ivan Neville, Anders
 Osborne, Tony Hall,
 Raymond Weber; "Let's
 Go" – Hipjoint featuring
 Sherry St. Germaine;
 "String Quartet in B flat
 major – Allegro" by
 Franz Schubert – Ana

Quartett; "Beauty in the
 World" – Macy Gray;
 "You Are the Best Thing"
 – Ray LaMontagne
Choreographer
 Kim Barnard
Sound Mixer
 Steve Aaron
Re-recording Mixers
 Marc Fishman
 Daniel Leahy
Supervising Sound
Editors
 Kelly Oxford
 Mike Wilhoit
Stunt Co-ordinator
 Mike Smith
Medical Consultant
 Steve Yung

CAST

Kate Hudson
 Marley Corbett
 Gael García Bernal
 Dr Julian Goldstein
 Rosemarie DeWitt
 Renee Blair
 Lucy Punch
 Sarah Walker
 Romany Malco
 Peter Cooper
 Treat Williams
 Jack Corbett
 Whoopi Goldberg
 God
 Kathy Bates
 Beverly Corbett
 Steven Weber
 Rob Randolph
 Peter Dinklage
 Vinnie
 Alan Dale
 Dr Sanders
 Jason Davis
 Thomas Blair
 Bailey Bass
 Charlotte Bass
 Cammie Blair
 Brett Rice
 ad agency client
 Maureen A. Brennan
 waiting area nurse
 Donna DuPlantier
 exam room nurse
 Jacqueline C. Fleming
 saleswoman
 James Hebert
 Matt
 Ivan J. Neville
 band leader
 Ian A. Neville
 Anders Osborne
 Tony Hall
 Raymond Weber
 Shamarr Allen
 Thomas Fitzpatrick
 Russell Batiste Jr
 Nick Daniels III
 band
 Molly
 Renegade
 Stanley
 Joe Greblo
 Malcolm Jones
 hang gliding instructors

Dolby Digital/DTS/
 SDDS
 Colour by
 DeLuxe
 [1.85:1]

Distributor
 Entertainment Film
 Distributors Ltd

9,582 ft +1 frame

Norwegian Wood

Japan/Hong Kong 2010

Director: Tran Anh Hung

With Matsuyama Ken'ichi, Kikuchi Rinko, Mizuhara Kiko, Kora Kengo

Certificate 15 133m 35s

Norwegian Wood is Haruki Murakami's 'straightest' novel, with none of the magic realism of his other works – no giant talking frogs or disappearing elephants. It's also by far his most commercially successful to date, which was perhaps the attraction of making it into a film. But notoriously, what works on the page doesn't necessarily work on the screen (and vice versa, of course). Murakami's novel is nearly 400 pages of introspective first-person narration interspersed with long static conversations that coil around one or two points – and, apart from some episodes of explicit sex, precious little action. How effectively could it translate to the screen?

As an adaptation, the film is exceptionally faithful. In his script, Vietnamese writer-director Tran Anh Hung (*Cyclo*, *The Scent of Green Papaya*) has truncated certain incidents, omitted a brief 20-years-on intro and dropped a few minor characters. But otherwise he essentially follows the novel without substantial change, apart from treating the sexual encounters with discretion. The first-person narrative is rendered in the most readily available way, in passages of voiceover. Anyone who's read the book need fear no surprises.

Unfortunately, the same goes for anyone who hasn't. After the unexplained suicide of Kizuki, protagonist Watanabe's closest friend, which occurs early in the film, it's not

SYNOPSIS Kobe, Japan, 1967. Watanabe, his friend Kizuki and Kizuki's girlfriend Naoko are pupils at a sixth-form college. They spend a lot of time together. After Kizuki commits suicide, Watanabe moves to Tokyo and starts university. He rents a room in a hostel and takes part-time jobs.

Two years later, Naoko visits him for her 20th birthday and they make love; he's surprised to find she's a virgin. The next day she leaves; he later learns that she's in a sanatorium in the country. Watanabe meets a fellow student, Midori, and is attracted to her, but feels he owes loyalty to Naoko.

Watanabe visits Naoko and meets her older roommate, Reiko. Naoko confesses that she and Kizuki had wanted to make love, but she was never able to become aroused. She now feels unable to have sex with Watanabe, and asks him to wait until she's better. Back in Tokyo, Watanabe's brash roommate Nagasawa takes him to a nightclub where they meet girls for casual sex. Watanabe dates Midori, but tells her he's committed to someone else.

Watanabe visits Naoko again; they embrace but afterwards she tells him to leave her alone. In Tokyo he moves into an apartment, hoping Naoko may join him when she leaves the sanatorium. Midori loses patience with him and rejects him. He hears from Reiko that Naoko has hanged herself. On her way through Tokyo to join her family, Reiko visits him and they sleep together. The next day, after Reiko's departure, Watanabe phones Midori and suggests they meet.

difficult to see the rest of the plot coming. Which it does, very slowly. The main characters, especially Watanabe (Matsuyama Ken'ichi), who carries most of such action as there is, spend a lot of time standing around looking glum or having rambling exchanges, mainly about how glum they feel. Even Midori (model Mizuhara Kiko, making her screen debut), the young student whose uncomplicated freshness entices Watanabe away from thoughts of the suicidal Naoko (Kikuchi Rinko), here seems a relatively subdued figure, lacking the sparkiness of her counterpart in the novel. The student riots of the late 1960s form a running backdrop but Watanabe drifts past them, too intent on his own melancholy to get involved.

Still, if the plot fails to engage, the film seduces the eye. Shooting in HD, DP Mark Lee Ping Bin comes into his own when Watanabe visits Naoko in her sanatorium deep in the hilly mid-Japanese countryside. His fluid camera caresses the gently undulating

landscape, tracking the seasons from green summer through to white winter; in one shot, as Watanabe and Naoko lie motionless side by side in the snow after yet another unsatisfactory encounter, the camera pulls back to gaze at them from way above, as if reducing them to corpses in the vast stillness. Jonny Greenwood's score nostalgically channels the mood of the 1960s; the Lennon-McCartney title song makes only a brief appearance.

But visual enchantment and an evocative score aren't enough to make up for a turgid, laboured narrative. It could be that Tran was hampered by reverence for his author; a freer adaptation might have served his material better. As it is, his version preserves the storyline but misses the poetry and sensuality of Murakami's writing. *Norwegian Wood* has long been reckoned an 'unfilmable' novel, and Tran's movie, beautiful but inert, can only go to confirm that reputation.

Philip Kemp

CREDITS

Directed by
 Tran Anh Hung
Producer
 Ogawa Shinji
Written by
 Tran Anh Hung
 Based on the novel by
 Haruki Murakami
**Director of
 Photography**
 Mark Lee Ping Bin
Editor
 Mario Battistel
Production Designers
 Yen Khe Luguern
 Ataka Nonfumi
Music Score
 Jonny Greenwood

**Production
 Companies**
 Asmik Ace
 Entertainment, Fuji
 Television Network,
 Fortissimo Films
Executive Producers
 Teshima Masao
 Karneyama Chihiro
**Co-executive
 Producers**
 Michael J. Werner
 Wouter Barendrecht
Associate Producers
 Matsuzaki Kaoru
 Ikeda Joe
Lighting Director
 Nakamura Yuki
Costume Designer
 Yen Khe Luguern

Sound Mixer
 Urata Tomoharu

CAST

Matsuyama Ken'ichi
 Watanabe Toru
Kikuchi Rinko
 Naoko
Mizuhara Kiko
 Midori
Kirishima Reika
 Ishida Reiko
Kora Kengo
 Kizuki
Hatsune Eriko
 Hatsumi
Tamayama Tetsuji
 Nagasawa
Ito Shigesato
 professor
Hosono Haruomi
 record shop owner
Takahashi Yukihiro
 gatekeeper

**Dolby Digital
 In Colour**
 [2.35:1]
 Subtitles

Distributor
 Soda Pictures

12,022 ft +8 frames



Lost in translation: Matsuyama Ken'ichi, Kikuchi Rinko

No Strings Attached

USA 2010

Director: Ivan Reitman

With Natalie Portman, Ashton Kutcher, Cary Elwes, Kevin Kline
Certificate 15 107m 51s

Basing itself around the 'friends with benefits' concept, this romantic comedy attempts to reverse gender norms. Emma (Natalie Portman) is a doctor who works 80 hours a week and simply wants sex on call, no emotions involved. Childhood friend Adam (Ashton Kutcher) seems up to the job, but finds it hard to accept her distant emotional state. Here is a woman who openly rejects cuddles and affection after sex, literally pushing her lover away. She's a character who, if male, would be cast as the bad guy. Adam, meanwhile, is a relatively sensitive man who quickly develops romantic feelings and struggles to keep jealousy at bay.

It's a straightforward swap and one that's initially refreshing; Emma's businesslike attitude provides a contrast to the typical romantic comedy heroine – no pratfalls in killer heels here. Portman and Kutcher are a decent match, and amusing support comes from Kevin Kline as his playboy father Alvin. If Alvin's pot-smoking womanising feels laboured on paper, Kline makes the best of it on screen. But the script soon dissolves into a series of repetitious vignettes. Adam and Emma sleep together, one of them gets jealous about something, they cool things off, they get back together... The narrative direction is clearly signalled and the journey simply doesn't have enough laughs or insight to keep boredom at bay. It's an improvement on director Ivan Reitman's last romantic comedy, *My Super Ex-Girlfriend* (2006), but the concept of 'friends with benefits' isn't original enough to hook the whole film on. It'll be interesting to see if Will Gluck's forthcoming *Friends with Benefits* can make more interesting work of the premise.

Anna Smith

SYNOPSIS Fifteen years ago, Kamp Weehawken, New Jersey. Teenagers Emma and Adam share a moment on a bench.

Some years later they meet again at a college party. She invites him to her father's funeral, after which they part.

One year ago, Los Angeles. When they meet in the street, Adam gets Emma's number.

The present. Adam works in television. He discovers that his ex-girlfriend Vanessa is dating his father Alvin. Upset, he gets drunk and starts calling girls in his phonebook. The next morning, he awakes naked at Emma's flat. She tells him that he called her and came round, but that nothing happened. They make love. Now a busy doctor, Emma suggests a sex-only relationship; Adam agrees. They regularly meet for sex but soon Adam becomes affectionate and Emma suggests they start seeing other people. However, when she drunkenly doorsteps Adam and finds him with two women, she becomes jealous. Adam discovers that Alvin and Vanessa want to have a child.

Valentine's Day. Adam asks Emma on a date but it ends badly. They stop seeing each other. Adam's father has a heart attack, and Vanessa leaves him. Six weeks later, Emma is preparing for her sister's wedding; she spontaneously calls Adam, who is filming a TV show. They reunite.

Closing credits show Alvin dating Lucy, a colleague with whom Adam had a flirtation.

CREDITS

Directed by Ivan Reitman
Produced by Ivan Reitman
Joe Medjuck
Jeffrey Clifford
Screenplay Elizabeth Meriwether
Story Mike Samonek
Elizabeth Meriwether
Director of Photography Rogier Stoffers
Film Editor Dana E. Glauberman
Production Designer Ida Random
Music by/Music Conducted by John Debney

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Production Companies Paramount Pictures, Cold Springs Pictures and Spyglass
Entertainment present a
Montecito Picture Company production
An Ivan Reitman film
Co-executive Producer Lisa Bruce
Executive Producers Roger Birnbaum
Gary Barber
Jonathan Glickman
Natalie Portman
Tom Pollock
Co-producers Ali Bell
Annette Savitch
Associate Producer John Wildermuth
Unit Production Manager Cristen Carr Strubbe
Supervising Co-ordinator Gregg Edler
Production Co-ordinator Susan Dukow
Production Accountants Donna Glasser
Hancock
Mark Mayer
Location Manager Gregory H. Alpert
Assistant Directors 1st: John Wildermuth
2nd: Christina Fong
Script Supervisor Janie Goldsmith
Camera Operator Paul Sanchez
Steadicam Operator Chris Squires
Chief Lighting

Technician Rick A. West
1st Company Grip Brian Reynolds
Visual Effects Hammerhead Productions
Special Effects Co-ordinator John Hartigan
Additional Editing Maria Gonzales
Art Director Greg Berry
Set Designer Anshuman Prasad
Set Decorators Danielle Berman
Jim Wallis
Property Master Max E. Brehme
Construction Co-ordinator Anthony Syracuse
Costume Designer Julie Weiss
Costume Supervisor Deborah Myles Davis
Make-up Department Head Tracey Levy
Key Make-up Artist Kathleen Karndene
Hair Department Head Barbara Lorenz
Key Hair Stylist Jacklin Mysterian
Main Title Design PIC
End Titles Scarlet Letters
Orchestrations Brad Dechter
Soundtrack "I Wanna Sex You Up" – Color Me Badd; "Ms. Jackson" – Outkast; "Click Click Click" – Bishop Allen; "Bang Bang Bang" – Mark Ronson featuring Q-Tip; "MINDR: 'Bleeding Love'" – Leona Lewis; "Down Down Down" – Ellery; "Untitled (How Does It Feel)" – D'Angelo; "Cruel and Unusual (CPR Remix)" – Shock of Pleasure; "I Will Let You Go" – Daniel Ahearn; "Boy" – Ra Ra Riot; "Life Is Precious" – Megan Jacobs; "Rhythm of Love" – Plain White T's; "Shake Ya Tailfeather" – Nelly featuring P. Diddy; Murphy Lee; "Don't Cha"; "What Good Is a Boy?" – Lanchen, additional vocals by Luke Walker; "99 Problems" – Hugo; "Bossa Nova Baby" – Elvis Presley; "Girlfriend" – Phoenix; "Take Your Time" – Al Green



Carry on doctor: Natalie Portman

featuring Corinne Bailey Rae; "It's Your Birthday" – Kevin Kline; "I'm the Only One for You" – Dewayne Satterfield; "It Was You" – Robbie Nevil, additional vocals by Matthew Gerrard, Robbie Nevil; "Cocktail Party" – Christopher Welch; "Rock It" – Little Red; "Love Lost" – The Temper Trap
Choreographer Marguerite Pomeroy Demicks
Sound Mixer Edward Tise
Re-recording Mixers Steve Pederson
Brad Sherman
Supervising Sound Editor Michael J. Benavente
Stunt Co-ordinator Conrad Palmisano

CAST

Natalie Portman
Emma
Ashton Kutcher
Adam
Cary Elwes
Dr Melzner
Kevin Kline
Alvin
Greta Gerwig
Patrice
Lake Bell
Lucy
Olivia Thirlby
Katie
Chris 'Ludacris' Bridges
Wallace
Jake Johnson
Eli
Mindy Kaling
Shira
Talia Balsam
Sandra Kurtzman
Ophelia Lovibond
Vanessa
Guy Branum
Guy
Ben Lawson
Sam
Jennifer Irwin
Megan
Adhir Kalyan
Kevin
Brian Dierker
Bones
Abby Elliott
Joy
Vedette Lim
Lisa
Gary David Goldberg
Emma's relative
Armen Weitzman
taxi driver

T. Shaun Russell
LACMA guard
Nealla Gordon
Lydia (female doctor)
Seth Morris
man with dog
Nasim Pedrad
Elizabeth Meriwether
writers
Mollie Gray
Sari
Derek Ferguson
Benji
Matthew Moy
Chuck
Tyne Stecklein
Victoria
Kym Connor
stage mom
Renna Bartlett
stage assistant director
Jennifer Hamilton
on-camera
choreographer
Krystal Ellsworth
Kim Marko Germar
Megan Honore
Nicholas Lanzisera
Moir 'Anjolie' Marfori
Dalpe Morantus
Katrina Katie Norman
Heather Phillips
Britt Stewart
Paula Van Oppen
William T. Loftis
Casey KC Monnie
Jason Williams
Secret High dancers
Hugo Chakrabongse
John Gerald Barclay
bar group
Tom Tangen
Tim Matheson
Eli's dads
Ben Lautman
rabbi
Joshua Allen
Andreacola
Milton Greenberg
boys at wake
Rachel McDermott
STK waitress
Robert Trapp
mini-golfer
Rachael Markarian
Kherington Payne
frat party dancers
Dylan Hayes
young Adam
Stefanie Scott
young Emma

Dolby Digital/DTS/SDS
In Colour
[2.35:1]
Distributor
Paramount Pictures UK
9,706 ft +8 frames

Oranges and Sunshine

United Kingdom/Australia 2010

Director: Jim Loach

With Emily Watson, David Wenham, Hugo Weaving, Richard Dillane
Certificate 15 104m 57s

How do you dramatise a 20-year-plus fight to reunite a thousand Australian child migrants with their British families, and gain recognition for their plight? Jim Loach's earnest, well-crafted and fiercely moving debut focuses on the initial 1980s crusade of Nottingham social worker Margaret Humphreys, who became the child migrants' champion almost accidentally after tracking down for an Australian visitor the English mother she'd believed dead since childhood. It's a good – and involving – vantage point, which lets the film convey the sheer scale of the scandal, and the official amnesia and hostility that greeted Margaret's attempts to uncover it, as well as highlighting the continuing misery of adults robbed of their identities and childhoods.

Emily Watson, giving off a luminous compassion braced by a brisk determination, makes Margaret a dogged and involving character, one who is intrigued rather than put off by the sudden flood of adults clamouring for her attention at the Fairbright Child Migrants reunion picnic, electrified by the news that they might not be orphans after all. With headlamp eyes shining with sympathy or outrage on behalf of her clients, Watson compensates for the film's televisual look and for screenwriter Rona Munro's over-empathetic dialogue. Munro supplies a well-honed if plodding narrative, which efficiently pulls together the dramatic high points from Margaret's exhausting years of staunchly arguing the child migrants' case. As the work wears her down, and she receives violent threats for publicising widespread abuse in orphanages, there are some uneasy parallels made between her mounting distress and the ordeals that her clients endured. Some clumsy ones, too, underlining her guilt at her long absences from her own young family while she battles to reunite others. Yet on the whole, the film keeps a fine and difficult balance between Margaret's deepening involvement and the halting, horrific stories of childhood sexual abuse and hard labour that her clients start to confide. Their confessions are among the film's most gripping scenes, all shot without sensationalism or sentimentality – even the sobbing account of a former chorister's Yuletide gang-rape that makes Margaret want to cancel her own Christmas.

The filmmakers have taken great pains not to misrepresent Margaret or her clients, which often makes them sketches in gratefulness and gives her a faintly saintly mien. Not all the brushwork is broad, however. Hugo Weaving is terrific as Jack, a gentle, emotionally scarred deportee whose



Look back in anger: Hugo Weaving, Emily Watson

dazed discovery that his mother died during his search for her is the film's heartbreaking moment. David Wenham is even better as the blustering, self-made Len, exacting an exquisite revenge on the Christian Brothers who terrorised him at the Bindoon orphanage by becoming their benefactor and taking Margaret, their scourge, to have tea among them.

Loach, a prolific TV director and son of British cinema's foremost political filmmaker, manages to make his own definite mark here, despite debuting in the 'social issue' genre strongly identified with his father. *Oranges and Sunshine* may blaze with the familial concern for the underdog and outrage at institutionalised cruelty, but it marries this with a quiet emotional directness and an almost documentary clarity in its storytelling that is entirely its own. Poignant rather than polemical, it's a film with a strong and welcome sense of moral responsibility. We could use a few more of them. **Kate Stables**

CREDITS

Directed by
Jim Loach
Produced by
Emile Sherman
Iain Canning
Camilla Bray
Written by
Rona Munro
Based on the book
Empty Cradles by
Margaret Humphreys
**Director of
Photography**
Denson Baker
Editor
Dany Cooper
Production Designer
Melinda Doring
Music
Lisa Gerrard

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(Oranges) Ltd, See-Saw
(Oranges) Pty Ltd, See-Saw
Films Pty Ltd, Screen
Australia, Screen NSW, South
Australian Film Corporation
**Production
Companies**
Screen Australia and
Little Gaddesden
Productions present in

association with
Fulcrum Media Finance,
EM Media, South
Australian Film
Corporation, DeLuxe
Australia, Screen NSW,
BBC Films a Sixteen
Films, See-Saw Films
production
Financed in association
with Screen Australia
Produced by Little
Gaddesden Productions
on behalf of Sixteen CD
Financed in association
with Fulcrum Media
Finance
Developed and co-
financed by EM Media,
with RIFE Lottery Funds
through the UK Film
Council
Supported by the East
Midlands Development
Agency
Financed in association
with The South
Australian Film
Corporation, DeLuxe
Australia, Screen NSW
and BBC Films
Developed with the
support of the MEDIA
Programme of the
European Union

Developed with
Buckland Productions
and Charles Dorfman
Executive Producers
Rebecca O'Brien
Anab Banerji
On Behalf of Icon
Entertainment
International:
Mark Gooder
On Behalf of Fulcrum
Media Finance:
Sharon Menzies
On Behalf of EM Media:
Suzanne Alizart
Line Producer
Joan Schneider
Associate Producer
Australia Unit:
Fiona Lanyon
Production Manager
UK Unit:
Louise Knight
**Production
Co-ordinators**
UK Unit:
Russell Noon
Australia Unit:
Bettina Hamilton
**UK Unit Production
Accountant**
Habib Rahman
Location Managers
UK Unit:
Richard Knight
Australia Unit:
Sarah Abbey
Assistant Directors
UK Unit:
1st: Kieran Murray-
Smith
2nd: James Manning
Australia Unit:
1st: Chris Webb

2nd: Brad Lanyon
Script Supervisor
Jo Beckett
Casting Directors
Kathleen Crawford
Nikki Barrett
Script Consultant
Roger Smith
Camera Operators
UK Unit:
B: Simon Finney
Australia Unit:
B: Nick Matthews
Gaffers
UK Unit:
Barnaby Sweet
Australia Unit:
Graeme Shelton
Key Grip
Australia Unit:
Robin Morgan
Visual Effects by
Post Modern
Art Directors
UK Unit:
Jane Levick
Australia Unit:
Tuesday Stone
Set Decorator
Australia Unit:
Glen Johnson
Prop Buyers
UK Unit:
Stephen Craighill
Australia Unit:
Jen Drake
Property Master
UK Unit:
Matt Wells
Construction Manager
Australia Unit:
John Moore
Costume Designer
Cappli Ireland

Costume Supervisors
UK Unit:
Emma Vickers
Australia Unit:
Marion Lee
**Titles Design/End
Credits**
Takashi Suzuki
Additional Music
Marcello De Francisci
Soundtrack
"Wild World" – Cat
Stevens; "Some Candy
Talking" – The Jesus
and Mary Chain; "Love
in the City"; "Make It
with Me"
**Production Sound
Mixer**
UK Unit:
John Hughes
Sound Recordist
Australia Unit:
James Currie
Re-recording Mixers
Gethin Creagh
Sam Hayward
**Supervising Sound
Editor**
Andrew Plain

CAST

Emily Watson
Margaret Humphreys
David Wenham
Len
Hugo Weaving
Jack

Richard Dillane
Merv
Lorraine Ashbourne
Nicky
Aisling Loftus
Susie
Stuart Wolfenden
Bill
Federay Holmes
Charlotte
Molly Windsor
Rachel
Harvey Scrimshaw
Ben
Tammy Wakefield
Susan
Alistair Cummings
Australia House official
Kate Rutter
Vera
Marg Downey
Miss Hutchison
Geoff Revell
Syd
Chrissie Page
Betty
Tristan Hudson
archivist
Marie Wheeler-King
Rita
Tanya Myers
Joan
Greg Stone
Bob
Russell Dykstra
Dan

Jude Henshall
radio interviewer
Tara Morice
Pauline
Mandahla Rose
nurse
Geoff Morrell
waiter
Barbara Marten
Mary
Tony Mack
TV interviewer
Neil Melville
monsignor
Neil Pigot
James
Eliza Lovell
hotel receptionist
Robert Purdy
charity rep 1
Tim Goodman
government official 1
Brenda Lawrence
government official 2
Carolina Giammetta
charity rep 2
Mark Jardine
charity rep 3
Kate Box
radio studio receptionist
Adam Morgan
shouting man
Adam Tedder
doctor
Marcus Eyre
Graham

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Icon Film Distribution

9,444 ft +13 frames

Patagonia

United Kingdom/USA/
Switzerland 2009

Director: Marc Evans

With Matthew Rhys, Marta Lubos,
Nahuel Pérez Biscayart, Nia Roberts
Certificate 15 118m 34s

Though all it shares with Gruff Rhys's wild and woolly documentary *Separado!* are its wind-whipped locations, Marc Evans's handsomely wistful road movie is this season's second sideways look at the cultural legacy of Y Wladfa, the Welsh colony established in Patagonia in the 19th century. It delicately links colony and homeland by plaiting a pair of contemporary emotional journeys undertaken by a Cardiff couple seeking solace in a Patagonian photo shoot and an elderly Patagonian hunting her lost roots in the Welsh valleys. In the attempt to tie them together, however, the film develops the kind of compare-and-contrast rhythm that initially makes one dread a melodramatic Inárittu-style narrative collision, and then, as one neat epiphany follows another, shamefully long for one.

Despite being designed to complement one another, the two stories fail to form a satisfying narrative whole, chiefly because the Patagonian love triangle of restless Gwen (Nia Roberts), work-obsessed photographer Rhys (Matthew Gravelle) and glamorous gaucho guide Mateo (Matthew Rhys) sinks gradually into soap opera, performed within the sumptuous landscape settings of Rhys's painstaking and painterly photographs. Co-screenwriters Laurence Coriat (*Wonderland, A Mighty Heart*) and Evans hint at the growing gulf between the couple caused by the secret of Gwen's infertility, but there's a stilted feel to the exchanges, despite Coriat's proven skill at this kind of emotional unpicking, which Roberts and Gravelle's purposely awkward playing exacerbates. *Patagonia* is smart enough to signal that Gwen is seduced by the escapism of the landscape and lifestyle as much as the carefree Mateo (to whom Rhys, despite his wide emotional range as an actor, brings only a stylised cowboy charm, and fluent Welsh). Yet the film suffers the same affliction, its infatuation with picturesque *asados*, ochre deserts and the smeary red and purple sunsets that Bruce Chatwin marvelled at, creating ravishing vistas which overwhelm the predictable betrayal played out in the foreground.

Robbie Ryan's gorgeous cinematography extends this visual lushness to Cerys's dogged quest to find her family farm, through damp Welsh hillsides in 50 shades of green. Though this plot dawdles where the other canters, its false starts and dead ends – and its performers – have a naturalistic, almost documentary charm, as the stoical, wily Cerys and her gauche teenage nephew Alejandro are hoodwinked by Welsh ne'er-do-wells and bewildered by place names ("There's a place here with six ls – must be a misprint") on their seemingly fruitless search. When Alejandro sinks



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O mother where art thou?: Nahuel Pérez Biscayart, Marta Lubos

into a prettified campsite romance with the owner's niece Sissy (a cute but undemanding cameo for songstress Duffy), and Cerys dies peacefully by the reservoir that long ago covered her village, the film once again elides scenery and sentiment. But Marta Lubos and Nahuel Pérez Biscayart inhabit their roles with an effortlessness that makes the other story strand look contrived by comparison.

Evans, whose *Snow Cake* (2006) proved his facility with quietly melodramatic character pieces, has created a thoughtful but ultimately maladroit piece, its concerns seemingly more formal than deeply felt, despite its poignant subject-matter. Caught up in the attempt to make a film that resounds with visual and thematic echoes, *Patagonia* forgets to provide something worth repeating.

♦♦ Kate Stables

CREDITS

Directed by
Marc Evans
Produced by
Rebekah Gilbertson
Flora Fernandez-
Marengo
Written by
Laurence Coniat
Marc Evans
**Director of
Photography**
Robbie Ryan
Editor
Mali Evans

Production Designer
Marie Lanna
Music by
Joseph LoDuca
Mateo's Theme by
Angelo Badalamenti

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**Production
Companies**
SAC & The Film Agency
for Wales present in
association with The
Wales Creative IP Fund
& JC Trust, Globe
Productions, Pepper

Post and Grenville
Thomas a Rainy Day
Films, Boom Films
production in
association with Red
Rum Films
Made with the support
of the Film Agency of
Wales, National Lottery
through The Arts
Council of Wales

Executive Producers
Huw Penallt Jones
Pauline Burt
Stefan Jonas
Claudia Blumhuber
Linda James
Marc Robinson
Jane Coombes
Grenville Thomas
Meirion Davies
Rhian Gibson
Chris Clark
Argentina:
Pia Suarez

Co-executive Producer
Lona Llewellyn-Davies
Line Producer
Lesley Stewart

Associate Producers
for Film Agency Wales:
Keith Potter
Wales:
Cheryl Jarrett Davies
Production Managers
Wales:
Jon Williams
Argentina:
Alejandra Marchioli

**Production
Co-ordinator**
Argentina:
Ana Luz Cordoba
**Production
Accountants**
Debbie Moore
Argentina:

Soledad Martinez
Location Managers
Wales:
Paul Bach Davies
Argentina:
Nicanor Gonzales del
Solar
**Post-production
Supervisor**
Layla Blackman
Assistant Directors
Wales:
1st: Jon Williams
2nd: Huw Jones
Argentina:
1st: Carina Sama
2nd: Marisol Freitas

Script Supervisor
Linos Wyn Jones
Casting Directors
Jessica Ronane
Javier Braier
Additional Writing
Jane Hawkley
Script Consultant
Sarah Golding
Camera Operator
Wales:
John Watters

Gaffers
Wales:
Ceiron Jenkins
Argentina:
Sebastian Mendelberg
Key Grips
Wales:
David Holliday
Argentina:
Sebastian Della Paulera

Visual Effects
Dolores McGinley
Additional:
Image Now
BlueBolt
Special Effects
Co-ordinator
Wales:

**Production Sound
Mixer**
Simon Fraser
Re-recording Mixer
Howard Bargroff

Huw Pearce
Art Directors
Wales:
Tom Pearce
Argentina:
Carina Lujan
Property Master
Argentina:
Leandro Calvo
Costume Designer
Marie Lanna
**Hair/Make-up
Designer**
Jo Evans
Hair Stylist
Argentina:
Valentina Bari

Titles Designed by
Deborah Caswell
Music Supervisor
Becky Bentham
Soundtrack
"Desearia", "Ar Lan y
Mor" – Duffy; "Dyma
Gariad fely
Morcedd/Dim Ond
Iesu" – Bryn Terfel; "Mi
Buenos Aires querido" –
Carlos Gardel;
"Redondel (Circle
Song)", "Duermie
negrito" – Kirsty
Almeida; "On the Floor
(Patagonia Dub Mix)" –
Kenneth Bager; "Lejos
de mi tierra" – Los
Corales; "Clara" – Alan
Pownall; "Yo vendo unos
ojos negros" –
Crescencio Lezcano y
Su Conji; "Tyrd I Lawr I'r
Ogof" – Meic Stevens;
"Ace of Spades" –
Motorhead; "Sad Sad
Feet" – Cate Le Bon;
"Tangnefedd Duw"

**Production Sound
Mixer**
Simon Fraser
Re-recording Mixer
Howard Bargroff

CAST
Matthew Rhys
Mateo
Marta Lubos
Cerys
**Nahuel Pérez
Biscayart**
Alejandro
Nia Roberts
Gwen
Matthew Gravelle
Rhys
Rhys Parry Jones
Martin
Duffy
Sissy

**Production Sound
Mixer**
Simon Fraser
Re-recording Mixer
Howard Bargroff

**Production Sound
Mixer**
Simon Fraser
Re-recording Mixer
Howard Bargroff

**Production Sound
Mixer**
Simon Fraser
Re-recording Mixer
Howard Bargroff

Paul

USA/United Kingdom/Japan 2011

Director: Greg Mottola

With Simon Pegg, Nick Frost,
Jason Bateman, Kristen Wiig

Certificate 15 103m 48s

Like the proverbial 1970s supergroup album, *Paul* brings together performers feted in their separate spheres, only to frustrate the expectations their seemingly complementary talents have inspired.

Writer-stars Simon Pegg and Nick Frost, best known for *Spaced* (1999-2001), *Shaun of the Dead* (2004) and *Hot Fuzz* (2007), have swapped their regular collaborator Edgar Wright for Greg Mottola, director of *Superbad* (2007) and *Adventureland* (2009), and filled out the cast with an impressive array of American comic actors, among them Kristen Wiig, Jason Bateman and Joe Lo Truglio, familiar from those films and from the cult sitcom *Arrested Development* (2003-06), on which Mottola was also a director. (Meanwhile Wright excelled with *Superbad*/Arrested Development actor Michael Cera in last year's *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*.)

As Graeme and Clive, Pegg and Frost play paunchy, lank-haired sci-fi fans and unpublished graphic novelists with a consuming attachment to one another, this time round uprooted to the US, where their pilgrimage to Comic-Con and tour of alleged UFO crash-sites in the West and Midwest is disrupted by the appearance of an actual alien, the eponymous Paul, voiced by, and sharing many star persona traits with, Seth Rogen. Able to vanish at will and bring the dead back to life, Paul has been in a government facility ever since his crash-landing in 1947, but with the next round of tests likely to kill him he now wants to go home. It falls to Graeme and Clive to help him evade capture.

Whereas *Shaun and Hot Fuzz* were obsessively detailed, ingeniously plotted comedies, full of recondite allusions, and quite serious about male immaturity and friendship, *Paul* is a chase movie-cum-Spielberg homage whose edges have been sanded down and whose more interesting ideas are never sufficiently developed. Even judged as a lightweight caper comedy, the writing rises to the occasion too infrequently, and with the exception of Rogen, few of the guest stars have much to work with.

It is disheartening to see a director as sensitive as Mottola lumbered with the cheap running joke of the two protagonists being mistaken for a couple via a series of forced set-ups (they share a hotel room by mistake, call each other "sausage", etc), more so since the joke never goes anywhere beyond an embarrassed denial and a raised eyebrow; and yet more so since it means Graeme and Clive's 14-going-on-40 relationship is never truly probed. The problem is compounded by the rote inclusion of Graeme's heterosexual love-interest Ruth (Wiig), an evolution-denying innocent whose eyes are opened by her exposure to Paul, living

SYNOPSIS US, present day. On a camper-van tour of UFO hotspots, British sci-fi fans Graeme and Clive encounter Paul, an alien who crash-landed on Earth in 1947. Recently escaped from a secret facility, Paul explains that he has served as a special adviser to government and the entertainment industry, but is now on the run from scientists whose latest attempts to harness his special powers – including invisibility and the ability to heal the sick – are likely to kill him.

Graeme and Clive agree to help Paul reach a rendezvous point where his friends will pick him up. The trio are pursued by Special Agent Zoil and two less experienced federal agents, Haggard and O'Reilly. Paul is spotted by campsite owner's daughter Ruth, to whom Graeme has taken a shine, and it is agreed to bring her along. Her father joins the chase.

Paul makes a detour to the home of Tara, the girl who discovered him in 1947, to apologise for the disruption he caused her and return her teddy bear. She comes along to the pick-up site. Zoil's boss arrives at the last minute; in the ensuing fight, in which Zoil is revealed to have been working for Paul all along, Graeme is wounded by Ruth's father. Paul risks his own life to save him, before leaving for his home planet, taking Tara with him.

Two years later. Graeme and Clive, successful authors of a semi-autobiographical book entitled *Paul*, attend Comic-Con.

proof that the world was not born, as she had thought, 4,000 years ago. By contrast, unreflecting atheists Graeme and Clive have apparently little to learn about anything, so that the film gets to be both smugly sophisticated about prejudiced religious types and packed with gay jokes.

A different film might have simply made Graeme and Clive gay, and then brought God-fearing Ruth – or better yet, a less simple-minded and caricatured Christian altogether – into their and Paul's orbit. The latter is, in any case, like the original E.T., not un-Jesus-like, making self-sacrifice the highest virtue when he risks his own life to save Graeme's. If the irony is intended, it certainly isn't brought into focus. Still, the alien's general resemblance to E.T. is explained by the film's best cameo and best joke, which is that Paul, as well as being a test-subject for government scientists, has been systematically exploited by the entertainment industry, which has disseminated his likeness through films and other media in order to prepare Earth's population for the official first contact. **Henry K. Miller**

CREDITS

Directed by
Greg Mottola
Produced by
Nira Park
Tim Bevan
Eric Fellner
Written by
Simon Pegg
Nick Frost
Director of Photography
Lawrence Sher
Editor
Chris Dickens
Production Designer
Jefferson Sage
Music
David Arnold

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Production Companies
Universal Studios
presents in association with
Relativity Media a
Working Title
production in
association with Big Talk
Pictures, Dentsu, Inc.
Executive Producers
Robert Graf
Liza Chasin
Debra Hayward
Natascha Wharton
Unit Production Manager

Robert Graf
Production Supervisor
Karen Ruth Getchell
Production Co-ordinator
Rachael Lin Gallagher
Production Accountants
Cheryl Kurk
Additional Photography:
Paul Belenardo
Location Managers
S. Todd Christensen
San Diego:
Chris Baugh
Additional Photography:
Eric Klosterman
Post-production Supervisor
Tania Blunden
Assistant Directors
1st: Jonathan Watson
Key 2nd: Ryan Craig
Script Supervisor
Sheila G. Waldron
Casting
Allison Jones
New Mexico:
Jo Edna Boldin
Directors of Photography
Additional Photography:
Jeff Cutter
Aerial:
David B. Nowell
Camera Operators
A: Dan Gold
B: Michael Chavez

B: Philip Pfeiffer
B: George Stephenson
Steadicam Operators
Brooks Robinson
John Joyce

Gaffer
Jarred Waldron
Key Grips
Sean Patrick Crowell
Additional Photography:
Bill Buckingham
Visual Effects Supervisor:
Jody Johnson
Producer:
Hal Couzens
Digital Visual Effects
Double Negative
Creature Effects
Spectral Motion, Inc.
Special Effects Co-ordinators
Larz Anderson
Additional Photography:
Steve Crenin
Animation Supervisor
Anders J.L. Beer

Art Directors
Richard Fojo
Additional Photography:
Steve Arnold
Set Designers
James F. Oberlander
Siobhan Roome
Amahl Lovato
Set Decorators
Carla Curry
Additional Photography:
Lia Roldan
Property Masters
Brad Einhorn
Additional Photography:
Mike Blaze

Construction Co-ordinator
Christopher D. Windisch
Costume Designer
Nancy Steiner
Costume Supervisors
Linda Matthews
Additional Photography:
Carlane Passman Little
Make-up Department Head
Tarra Day

Make-up Artist
Georgia Allen
Paul Puppet Effects Created by
Mike Elizalde
Hair Department Heads
Geordie Sheffer
Additional Photography:
Jeri Baker

Hairstylist
Berlinda Cantu-Lewis
Titles Designed by
Oscar Wright
Main Titles
Baseblack
End Credit Sequence/Roller
VooDooDog

Additional Music
Michael Price
Score Orchestrated/Conducted by
Nicholas Dodd
Music Supervisor
Nick Angel

Soundtrack
"Another Girl, Another Planet" – The Only Ones; "Flying Saucers Rock 'n' Roll" – Billy Riley and His Little Green Men; "Don't Bring Me Down" – "All over the World" – Electric Light Orchestra; "Got to Give It Up" – Marvin Gaye; "Cantina Band" from Star Wars by John Williams – Syd Masters and the Swing Riders; "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" by John Williams; "I Hate to Say Goodbye" – Freddie "LeRoy" Steagall, Al Cantu, Rick Mensa; "Just the Two of Us" – Grover Washington Jr.; Bill Withers; "Hello It's Me" – Todd Rundgren;

"Dancing in the Moonlight" – King Harvest; "Chase the Devil" – Max Romeo; "Planet Claire" – The B-52's

Music Consultant
Kirsten Lane
Sound Mixers
Peter F. Kurland
Additional Photography:
Pud Cusack
Re-recording Mixers
Chris Burdon
Doug Cooper
Supervising Sound Editor
Julian Slater
Stunt Co-ordinator
Darrin Prescott

CAST

Simon Pegg
Graeme Willy
Nick Frost
Clive Gollings
Jason Bateman
Special Agent Zoil
Kristen Wiig
Ruth Buggs
Bill Hader
Haggard
Blythe Danner
Tara Walton
Joe Lo Truglio
O'Reilly
John Carroll Lynch
Moses Buggs
Jane Lynch
Pat Stevens
David Koechner
Gus
Jesse Plemons
Jake
Sigourney Weaver
the Big Guy
Seth Rogen
voice of Paul
Mia Stallard
young Tara
Jeremy Owen
sword vendor
Jeffrey Tambor
Adam Shadowchild
David House
security guard
Jennifer Granger
Adam Shadowchild fan
Nelson Ascencio
Jorge
Mark Sivertsen
state trooper
Joe Berryman
gas station attendant
Steven Spielberg
himself
Syd Masters
Gary Roller
Oliver O'Shea
Lonnie Otha-Mayer
Will Veitch
band members
Michael Miller
police officer
Lori Dillen
robed woman
J. Todd Anderson
comic book clerk
Brett Michael Jones
Keith Nash
Diego Deane
fireworks store clerk
Bryan Blair
Alton Robert Capwell
Eric Fiedler
Jurgen Heimann
Kyle Jay Martin
Scott Millenbaugh
puppeteers

Dolby Digital/DTS/SDDS
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Universal Pictures
International UK & Eire

9,342 ft +0 frames

The Rite

USA 2011

Director: Mikael Håfström

With Anthony Hopkins, Colin O'Donoghue, Alice Braga

Certificate 15 113m 33s

"Inspired by true events" and "suggested by the book by Matt Baglio", Mikael Håfström's take on exorcism is neither very inspired nor suggestive of any terribly compelling evil. Though punctuated with a few disquieting moments, it's too plodding and episodic to gather steam, and is further stymied by a stolid lead actor and a screenplay whose gaps are not the source of meaningful mystery.

Colin O'Donoghue glowers and looks mildly worried as seminary graduate Michael, who goes to Rome and ends up apprentice to a busy exorcist named Trevant (Anthony Hopkins). Trevant takes his work in his stride, to the point of being weirdly casual (taking a phone call mid-exorcism, or accusing a mother of beating her haunted child and then instantly abandoning the bluff). He lets Michael tag along, playing world-weary veteran to Michael's rational young sceptic.

Michael's hesitation comes from a crisis of faith that's never satisfyingly explained or expressed (but then nor is his embrace of seminary school in the first place). His backstory reveals a family funeral business (his mortician dad is Rutger Hauer), and these muted domestic scenes are spookier than most of the later satanic showboating. Indeed, flashbacks to childhood, lathered in white light, suggest more inefable trauma than O'Donoghue can evoke as the adult Michael.

There's the typical intra-scene suspense in the exorcism sessions (with a pregnant teenager), which as usual exploit the voyeurism of seeing a priest sullied or private neuroses crudely aired and picked at. (The goal is, per tradition, to get the devil to identify himself, though it's never quite clear why, with the resources available to the Dark One, he bothers to acquiesce.) One of Hopkins' favourite techniques is to suggest a separation from the words he's speaking, creating an ambiguity appropriate to the supernatural goings-on. As a matter-of-fact exorcist working by hook or by crook, he seems a clear target for corruption himself, which leads to a train of events eliciting prime Hopkins hamminess. Except for Marta Gastini's slyly possessed teen, the supporting cast is deflated (Alice Braga as a journalist who becomes Michael's sidekick to no real end) or distracting (Ciarán Hinds as wide-eyed a priest/lecturer).

By the finish, *The Rite* has so bored you with what it's done (and not done) that the ending feels abrupt (why stop here, particularly, and like this?). Without a deep sense of moral and emotional investment, the movie can never really get its hooks into our anxieties and internal debates. As is, it's just the usual horse-and-pony show, and even if it's a demon mule, we've seen better. **Nicolas Rapold**



Close encounters of the nerd kind: Simon Pegg, Nick Frost

CREDITS

Directed by
Mikael Häfström
Produced by
Beau Flynn
Tripp Vinson
Written by
Michael Petroni
Suggested by the book
by Matt Baglio
Director of Photography
Ben Davis
Edited by
David Rosenbloom
Production Designer
Andrew Laws
Music
Alex Heffes

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Production Companies
New Line Cinema
presents a Contrafilm production
A Mikael Häfström film
With the support of the Roma Lazio Film Commission
Produced with the assistance of the Italian Tax Credit provided for by law no.244 of 24 December 2007
Executive Producers
Richard Brenner
Merideth Finn
Robert Bernacchi
Co-producers
Christy Fletcher
Emma Parry
Mark Tuohy
Italy Line Producer
Gian Paolo Varani
Unit Production Managers
Robert Bernacchi
Eléna Zokas
Production Managers
Hungary:
Mária Ungor
Italy Unit:
Vito Colazzo
Francesca Gingolani
Production Co-ordinator
Italy Unit:
Mona Bernal
Financial Controller
Dorothy Precious
Supervising Location Manager
Marco Giacalone
Location Managers
János Csérvén
Tamás Maros
Post-production Supervisor
Charlene Olson
2nd Unit Director
Hungary – 2nd Unit:
John Greaves
Assistant Directors
1st: Sean Guest
2nd: James Haven
2nd: Bogi Móczár
2nd: Senica Billingsley

Hungary – 2nd Unit
1st: Jessica Laws
Italy Unit
1st: Filippo Fassetta
2nd: Luca Padrini
2nd: Franco Basaglia
Script Supervisors
Dora Simko
Hungary – 2nd Unit:
Lidia Jung
Italy Unit:
Eleonora Baldwin
Casting
Deborah Aquila
Tricia Wood
UK:
Gail Stevens
Italy:
Michela Forbicioni
Directors of Photography
Chicago:
Jonathan Freeman
Hungary – 2nd Unit:
Tim Wooster
B Camera Operator/ Steadicam Operator
Julian Morson
Chief Lighting Technicians
David Smith
Hungary:
Zsolt Buti
Hungary – 2nd Unit:
József Szűcsk
Italy Unit:
Patrick Bramucci
Massimo Bertucci
Key Grips
Paolo Frasson
Hungary:
Imre Sisa
Hungary – 2nd Unit:
Pál Paluch
Italy Unit:
Paolo Frasson
Roberto Di Pietro
Visual Effects
Prologue Films
Method Studios
Pxomondo
DigiScope
Special Effects Supervisors
Gábor Croughwell
Italy Unit:
Franco Fabio Galiano
Special Effects
Attila Érczkóvi
Bence Ark
Supervising Art Director
Stuart Kearns
Art Director
Lóránd Jávör
Set Decorators
Peter Walpole
Hungary:
Zoltán Horváth
Italy Unit:
Cristina Onori
Property Masters
Dave Fisher
Hungary:
Márton Szalay
Costume Designer
Carlo Poggioni
Costume Supervisor
Serena Fiumi

Wardrobe Supervisor
Hungary
Zsuzsa Stenger
Make-up/Hair Designer
Trefor Proud
Key Hair/Make-up Artist
Tracey Wells
Key Make-up Artist
Sharon Martin
Effects Make-up Artist
Kristyan Mallett
Hairdresser
Gabriella Németh
Italy Unit Hair Stylists
Gaetano Panico
Aniello Piscopo
Main Title Designed by
Picture Mill
End Titles
Scarlet Letters
Orchestrators
Jeff Atmajian
Andrew Kinney
Ben Wallfisch
Soundtrack
"Don't Miss Me" – The Derek Trucks Band:
"Rhapsodie Italiana" by Alex Heffes – Maya Magub:
"All Clubbed Out" by Alex Heffes – Alex Heffes:
"The Four Seasons" by Antonio Vivaldi – Ensemble Elan featuring Maya Magub:
"Sonny Boy"
Sound Designer
Dave Whitehead
Production Sound Mixer
Mac Ruth
Sound Mixer
Hungary – 2nd Unit:
Pános Csáki
Re-recording Mixers
John Reitz
Greg Rudloff
Rick Kline
Supervising Sound Editor
Mark Mangini
Stunt Co-ordinators
Gábor Croughwell
Rick LeFevour
Hungary:
Domonkos Párdányi
Italy:
Stefano Mioni
Technical Adviser
Matt Baglio

CAST

Anthony Hopkins
Father Lucas Trevant
Colin O'Donoghue
Michael Kovak
Alice Braga
Angeline Vargas
Toby Jones
Father Matthew
Ciarán Hinds
Father Xavier
Rutger Hauer
Istvan Kovak
Maria Grazia Cucinotta

Aunt Andra
Marta Gastini
Rosana
Arianna Veronesi
Francesca
Andrea Calligari
Vincenzo
Chris Marquette
Eddie
Torrey DeVitto
Nina
Ben Cheetham
young Michael
Marija Karan
Sandra, injured cyclist
Rosa Pianeta
woman in exorcism video
Giampiero Ingrassia
doctor
Rosario Tedesco
police officer
Cecilia Dazzi
nurse
Attila Bárdóczy
Xavier's secretary
Nadia Kibout
ethnic nun
Anita Pititto
Vatican nun
Sándor Baranyai
concierge
Fabiola Balestriere
young girl
Anikó Vincze
Katalin Kovak

Dolby Digital/DTS/ SDDS
Colour/Prints by DeLuxe
[2.35:1]
Part-subtitled

Distributor
Warner Bros
Distributors (UK)

10,219 ft +11 frames

Route Irish

United Kingdom/France/Italy/
Belgium/Spain 2010

Director: Ken Loach

With Mark Womack, Andrea Lowe,
John Bishop, Trevor Williams
Certificate 15 108m 51s

In what could be his most violent and despairing film to date, Ken Loach attempts literally to bring home – to Liverpool, in this instance – the horror shared, compounded or exploited by western and other outside agents, be they official armies or 'independent' security contractors, in such seemingly faraway war-tormented countries as Iraq and Afghanistan. Further, his requirement of his long-term scriptwriter Paul Laverty to restrict the action – barring flashback sequences, phone-recorded video clips or Skype conversations – to England and within the confines of the more or less conventional investigative thriller format has resulted in one of his most uncharacteristically complex, serpentine films. On this evidence, you could say, Loach is no natural thriller director.

But that may be to miss the point. This, Loach's third period (if, for convenience, you bracket the BBC/pre-Jim Allen works, the Allen collaborations and now his 15-year, 10-feature partnership with Laverty), has seen an ever greater broadening and exploration of the internationalist dimension within the director's own brand of social-realist cinema – which is as true of his so-called 'lighter' home-focused features like the recent *Looking for Eric* (2009) as it is of more mordant globetrotting excursions such as *Carla's Song* (1996) or *Bread and Roses* (2001).

In *Route Irish*, in concert with his view of the contaminating, essentially destructive influence of outside policy towards, and actions in, the Middle and Near East, Loach presents, in

the complex, guilty and psychopathetically out-of-control figure of Fergus (Mark Womack), one of the least sympathetic central figures in all his dramas. It's a brave, potentially audience-alienating step and one that asks viewers to forgo normal identification and dramatic satisfactions, relying instead on their willingness to countenance and accept discomfiting truths and, perhaps, their ability to forgive sometimes quite clearly placed 'political' points for what they are – acknowledgments of the greater picture within which the drama unfolds.

If that is to admit that *Route Irish* has its difficulties and awkwardnesses – the film's flow is far from seamless, its investigative trail full of initially confusing detours and dramatic hyperbole – its performances ensure an anchoring sense of credibility. Comedian John Bishop gives a good account of himself as Fergus's noble friend Frankie, killed on the notoriously dangerous 'Route Irish' in Baghdad. Womack, importantly, gives a performance of quiet, tortured intensity as a man, to quote Laverty, "with Iraq inside his head", his only moments of relative happiness – watching his blinded ex-comrade Craig (Craig Lundberg) playing football in the park – suggesting the kind of sublimating homoeroticism that is forged between fighting soldiers; it's this that explains Fergus's motivation for revenge rather than any abstract notion of righting wrongs on his part. Likewise, his sadomasochistically expressed love affair with Frankie's girlfriend Rachel (Andrea Lowe) can be seen as an unfulfillable shared possession by an already drowning man. Such complex psychosexual intimations are a novelty in Loach's work and, arguably, deepen it. Chris Menges, as cinematographer, provides the same chilly, uninflected clarity to the characters' environment as he did in *Kes* some 40 years earlier.

Not an easy or perfect work but a forceful and, in the end, commendable one. **Wally Hammond**

SYNOPSIS Liverpool, 2007. Fergus, a disenchanted ex-SAS soldier recently employed by a British security company in Iraq, attends the funeral of his former colleague Frankie, who was killed on the notoriously dangerous 'Route Irish' (the road between Baghdad's Green Zone and its airport). Haynes, the security company boss, gives a speech describing Frankie as a hero.

Following the funeral, the volatile and suspicious Fergus interrogates Haynes and his assistant Walker about the circumstances of Frankie's death, but without satisfaction. Marisol, a Spanish friend, gives Fergus a mobile phone that had been in Frankie's possession. The phone leads Fergus to video footage showing the murder of an Iraqi family and two young boys, seemingly by Nelson, a security contractor with a reputation for violence, together with three Colombian security workers. Fergus contacts another contractor in Iraq, Tommy, to help investigate the firm's incident reports. Frankie's girlfriend Rachel tells Fergus that Frankie didn't go to Iraq for the money but for his love of Fergus. Flashbacks reveal Fergus's own violent behaviour as a soldier towards Iraqis in joint operations with US forces. Fergus's friendship with Rachel develops into a sexual relationship with sadomasochistic overtones.

Fergus places a phone bug and a tracking device in Walker's car, which point to a cover-up by the security company aimed at protecting an upcoming merger. Fergus receives information indicating that Nelson had intended to kill Frankie. When Nelson arrives in Liverpool, Fergus kidnaps him and, having extracted a confession with waterboarding techniques, kills him. Tommy arrives back in Liverpool and proves Nelson's innocence. Rachel declares her love for Fergus.

A guilty, despairing Fergus boards the Mersey-Birkenhead ferry, which he associates with his hopeful boyhood dreams; he jumps in the water and drowns himself.

SYNOPSIS Small-town America, the present. Michael Kovak works with his father as a mortician and also attends a seminary, though after graduating he decides to quit the priesthood. A teacher convinces him to train to be an exorcist.

Michael travels to Rome to attend an exorcism school, but the head lecturer recommends he study with the unorthodox Father Lucas Trevant. Trevant immediately involves Michael in an exorcism session with a pregnant teenager. She contorts herself and vomits nails. On another visit, Trevant takes Michael on a house call to a boy scarred by a demon mule's hoofprints. Michael is sceptical, however, and remains unsure of his faith.

Trevant and Michael visit the pregnant teen at the hospital. This time Michael takes charge. After Michael and Trevant leave, the girl miscarries and dies. Michael talks about this to Angeline, a journalist he met in the lecture class.

Michael receives a phone call from his father, then learns that he died earlier that day. Michael is beset by memories of his mother and her funeral. When a plague of frogs manifests in his room, he moves to a hotel. Outside, snow and a demon mule appear. Michael and Angeline visit the mule boy again.

Trevant is now possessed. Michael and Angeline visit, and a protracted exorcism follows. Michael prevails. Michael and a recovered Trevant say farewell. Back in America, Michael returns to the priesthood.

CREDITS

Director
Ken Loach
Producer
Rebecca O'Brien
Screenplay
Paul Lavery
Photography
Chris Menges
Editor
Jonathan Morris
Production Designer
Fergus Clegg
Music
George Fenton

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Why Not Productions
S.A., Wild Bunch S.A.,
France 2 Cinéma,
Urania Pictures, Les
Films du Fleuve,
Tornasol Films S.A., Alta
Producción S.L.U.

Production Companies
A Sixteen Films, Why
Not Productions, Wild
Bunch, Les Films de
Fleuve, Urania Pictures,
Tornasol Films, Alta
Producción & France 2
Cinéma production with
the participation of
Canal+, France
Télévisions,
Cinéma, Sofica
UGC 1, Diaphana
Distribution, Cinéart,
Canto Bros Productions
& Vision+Media
Financing: Inver Invest
(Muriel Bostyn), Modal
Installation, Magasin
Duck Liège
With the support of Tax
Shelter du
gouvernement Belge
Developed with the
support of the MEDIA
development fund
Executive Producers
Pascal Caucheteux
Vincent Maraval
Line Producer
Tim Cole
Production Manager
Jordan Unit:
Fuad Khalil
Production
Co-ordinators
Eimhear McMahon
Jordan Unit:
Reem Bandak
Production
Accountants
Tina Shadick
Jordan Unit:
Maha Hanna
Locations
Claire Newton
Assistant Directors
David Gilchrist
Michael Queen
Script Supervisor
Susanna Lenton
Casting
Kahleen Crawford
Jordan Unit:
Lara Atalla
Raya Hamdan
Basil Karim
Script Consultant
Roger Smith
Additional Camera
Jason Bulley
Gaffer
Lee Walters
Special Effects
Supervisor
David Harris
Art Director
Grant Armstrong
Prop Buyer
Anita Gupta
Prop Master
Colin Mutch
Construction Manager
Danny Sumson
Costume Designer
Sarah Ryan
Costume Supervisor
Sam Scragg
Wardrobe
Jordan Unit:

Phaedra Dahdaleh
Abdel Rayyan
Make-up/Hair
Designer
Carl Mather
Titles Design
Martin Butterworth
Creative Partnership
End Titles
Martin Bullard
Soho Film Lab
Soundtrack
"Rocks" – Primal
Scream; "Baghdad" –
Talib Rasool
Recordist
Ray Beckett
Re-recording Mixers
Ian Tapp
James Doyle
Sound Editor
Kevin Brazier
Stunt Co-ordinator
Paul Heasman

CAST

Mark Womack
Fergus
Andrea Lowe
Rachel
John Bishop
Frankie
Trevor Williams
Nelson
Geoff Bell
Walker
Jack Fortune
Haynes
Talib Rasool
Harim
Russell Anderson
Tommy
Craig Lundberg
Craig
Jamie Michie
Jamie
Bradley Thompson
young Fergus
Daniel Foy
young Frankie
Najwa Nimri
Marisol
Maggie Southers
Frankie's mother
R David
David
Anthony Schumacher
Andy
Gary Cargill
undertaker
Donna Elso
Peggy
Stephen Lord
Steve
James Locke
Jay
Natalie Flood
Andy Dwyer
Taban Othman
Ali Karami
Nasredine Banda
Nick Baty
cast members
Tayf Basil
Yousef
Ranj Hawra
Ranj
Hind Kamil
mother
Malik Amir
Mohsen Fakhr
Aseel Salam
Kevin Burton
Tagreed Asad
Omar Abdelazeez
Sajida Hassan
cast members

Dolby Digital
Colour by
DeLuxe

Distributor
Artificial Eye Film
Company

9,796 ft +8 frames

Sanctum

USA/Australia 2010

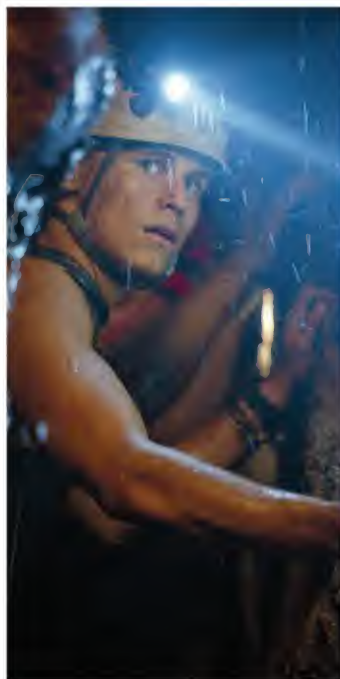
Director: Alister Grierson

**With Richard Roxburgh,
Rhys Wakefield, Ioan Gruffudd**
Certificate 15 108m 41s

Marketed as 'James Cameron's *Sanctum* 3D' by a distributor presumably not convinced that Australians cave-diving would furnish enough of an audience draw in themselves, *Sanctum* is very much Executive Producer Cinema, bearing the same remote, crudified authorial stamp of say Spielberg on *Twister* (1996). The difference is the budget, which at around \$30 million is remarkably low for a 3D disaster movie shot using the technology developed for *Avatar*. Thanks to the plot motor of a flash-flood imperilling the explorers of a cave system in Papua New Guinea, the obvious comparison among Cameron's own films has to be his underrated *The Abyss* (1989), though any likelihood of a supernatural dimension is firmly scotched from the start.

Whereas Neil Marshall's not dissimilar *The Descent* (2005) had its own six trapped spelunkers menaced by albino flesh-eaters – almost unnecessarily, given the claustrophobia and personal drama of the initial set-up – the soundest move of Alister Grierson's film is to rely wholly on the practical calamities at his disposal, working from the true-life experiences of co-screenwriter Andrew Wight, who narrowly escaped death in a cave collapse under Australia's Nullarbor Plain.

The first casualty in the film is by far its most upsetting: the escalating tug-of-war between two stricken divers attempting so-called 'buddy breathing' with a single air tank has the hideous charge of watching humans – friends – claw each other maniacally for survival. It's just regrettable that Wight's diving



Watery grave: Rhys Wakefield

SYNOPSIS Papua New Guinea, the present. Expert diver Frank is leading an expedition in the unexplored Esa'ala underwater cave system. Money man Carl arrives with Frank's semi-estranged son Josh, who has forgotten the breathing apparatus he was supposed to bring. Frank's chief diving partner Jude snags her air pipe in a constricted tunnel, causing her to panic and drown. A rising storm outside begins to flood the caves. The team try to evacuate but Carl, Frank, Josh and teammates Victoria and George are sealed inside by a boulder, which knocks Papuan guide Luko against a chamber wall. They decide to follow the river deeper inside the cave system in the hope of finding an exit to the sea.

Luko is found alive, but so badly wounded that Frank seeks permission for a mercy-drowning. George attempts to conceal the decompression sickness he's had in the past, then deliberately lags behind to die alone. Victoria falls into a whirlpool when she cuts her hair free of a rope clip. Carl disappears with the breathing equipment to find her body, but Frank and Josh catch up with him. Frank is impaled in a struggle and Carl swims away. Josh helps Frank die, then swims his way out of the cave with the last remaining air canister, past the floating body of Carl.

expertise hasn't been incorporated into a more airtight piece of storytelling, and that the arduous shoot evidently endured by the cast didn't communicate itself as the only three-dimensional facet of these characters.

Compared with the wrenching marital recriminations of Ed Harris and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio in *The Abyss*, the huffy conflict here between team leader Frank and his estranged son Josh feels like very small fry indeed, coming over as cheaply derivative of *The Day after Tomorrow* (2004) and any number of other action-disaster scenarios. A fulminating Richard Roxburgh, as Frank, and the unappealingly girlish blankness of *Home and Away* alumnus Rhys Wakefield as Josh aren't up to the task of taking this relationship anywhere we want to follow. Still, the worst offender is guest Brit Ioan Gruffudd, whose daredevil paymaster Carl is a thoroughly bogus and implausible figure. Anyone who's seen Cameron's *Aliens* (1986) will know what betrayals he's sure to be capable of, but Grierson is too busy plumbing his film's intermittently seductive 3D waterscapes to make any real sense of this stock nutter.

➔ **Tim Robey**

CREDITS

Directed by
Alister Grierson
Produced by
Andrew Wight
Written by
John Garvin
Andrew Wight
Director of Photography
Jules O'Loughlin
Editor
Mark Warner
Production Designer
Nicholas McCallum
Music
David Hirschfelder

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International LLC
Production Companies
James Cameron,
Universal Pictures,
Relativity Media,
Wayfare Entertainment
present in association
with FilmNation a Great
Wight production
Made with the support
of Follow Through
Productions
Produced with the
assistance of Screen
Queensland
Post-produced with the
assistance of Film
Victoria

Executive Producers
James Cameron
Ben Browning
Michael Maher
Peter Rawlinson
Ryan Kavanaugh
Co-producer
Aaron Ryder
Line Producer
Brett Popplewell
Associate Producer
Leesa Kahn
Unit Production Manager
Rosslyn Abernathy
Production Co-ordinator
Judy Hallin
Production Accountant
Angela Kenney
Location Managers
Chris Stewe
Mike McLean
Dunk Island Additional Crew:
Scott Stewart
Post-production Co-ordinator
Anthea Charalambous
2nd Unit Director
Ian 'Thistle' Thorburn
Assistant Directors
1st: Wade Savage
2nd: Angela McPherson
Dunk Island Additional Crew

Soundtrack
"Rabaul taun" – Junior
Kokoratts; "Maipope" –
Tusti Roots
Supervising Sound Designer
Paul Pirola
Sound Recordists
Paul 'Clackers' Clark
3rd Additional Crew:
Chris Roland
Re-recording Mixers
Paul Pirola
Rob MacKenzie
Stunt Co-ordinator
Chris Anderson

CAST

Richard Roxburgh
Frank McGuire
Rhys Wakefield
Josh McGuire
Alice Parkinson
Victoria
Dan Wyllie
Crazy George
Ioan Gruffudd
Carl Hurley
Christopher Baker
J.D.
Nicole Downes
Liz
Allison Cratchley
Jude
Cramer Cain
Luko
Andrew Hansen
Dex
John Garvin
Jim Sergeant
Sean Dennehy
chopper pilot
Nea Diap
Kastom shaman

Dolby Digital/DTS
In Colour
[1.85:1]
3D

Distributor
Universal Pictures
International UK & Eire

9,781 ft +8 frames

IMAX prints
108m 0s

Submarine

United Kingdom 2010

Director: Richard Ayoade

With Noah Taylor, Paddy Considine, Craig Roberts, Yasmin Paige

Certificate 15 96m 48s

Submarine is our Film of the Month and is reviewed on 44.

CREDITS

Directed by

Richard Ayoade

Produced by

Mark Herbert

Andy Stebbing

Producer

Mary Burke

Written by

Richard Ayoade

Based on the novel by

Joe Dunthorne

Director of

Photography

Erik Alexander Wilson

Editors

Nick Fenton

Chris Dickens

Production Designer

Gary Williamson

Original Score by

Andrew Hewitt

Songs by

Alex Turner

©Channel 4 Television

Corporation, UK Film

Council and Warp

(Submarine) Limited

Production

Companies

Film4 and UK Film

Council present in

association with The

Wales Creative IP Fund

and The Film Agency for

Wales in association

with Optimum

Releasing and

Protagonist Pictures in

association with Red

Hour Films a Warp Films

production

Executive Producers

Pauline Burt

Peter Carlton

Will Clarke

Paul Higgins

Linda James

Tessa Ross

Ben Stiller

Stuart Cornfeld

Jeremy Kramer

Line Producer

Cass Marks

Associate Producer

Ally Gipps

Welsh Associate

Producer

Rebecca Davies

Production

Co-ordinator

Hannah Simpson

Production

Accountant

Craig Barwick

Location Manager

Iwan Roberts

Post-production

Supervisor

Gisela Evert

Assistant Directors

1st: Joe Geary

2nd: Paul Cathie

Script Supervisor

Carole Salisbury

Cast by

Karen Lindsay Stewart

Northern Casting

Director

Emma Stafford

Script Consultant

Joe Dunthorne

2nd Camera Operator

Richard Phillipott

Gaffer

Andy Lowe

Visual Effects

FrameStore

Special Effects

Supervisor

Danny Hargreaves

Art Director

Sarah Pasquali

Set Decorator

Cathy Cosgrove

Property Master

Peter Hallam

Construction Manager

Andy Smith

Costume Designer

Charlotte Walter

Costume Supervisor

Hannah Walter

Hair/Make-up

Designer

Tara MacDonald

Make-up Artists

John Munro

Jennifer Harty

Title Design

Sharon Lock

Darren Agnew

Orchestra

The Composers



Teen schemer: Craig Roberts

Ensemble
Music Supervisor
Phil Canning
Soundtrack
"Stuck on the Puzzle
(Intro)", "Hiding Tonight",
"Glass in the Park", "It's
Hard to Get around the
Wind", "Piledriver Waltz",
"Stuck on the Puzzle" –
Alex Turner; "Power of
Science"; "Lux
Aeterna"; "Luminosity"
Production Sound
Mixer
Martin Beresford
Re-recording Mixers
Nigel Heath
James Feltham
Stunt Co-ordinator
Ray De Haan

CAST

Noah Taylor

Lloyd Tate

Paddy Considine

Graham Purvis

Craig Roberts

Oliver Tate

Yasmin Paige

Jordana Bevan

Sally Hawkins

Jill Tate

Darren Evans

Chips

Osiain Cai Dulais

Mark Pritchard

Lily McCann

Zoe Preece

Otis Lloyd

Keiron

Elinor Crawley
Abby Smuts
Steffan Rhodri
Mr Davey
Gemma Chan
Kim-Lin
Melanie Walters
Jude Bevan
Sion Tudor Owen
Brynny Bevan
Adrienne O'Sullivan
Jackie
Jonny Weir
Malcolm
Lydia Fox
Miss Dutton
Lynne Hunter
Gene
Claire Cage
news reporter
Edwin Ashcroft
Dafydd
Andrew Phillips
Rhydian Bird
James Alexander Hill
Rikki Hall
Tom Ryan
James Jones
schoolboys
Sophy Brady-Halligan
Tanya Brady-Halligan
the Watkins twins
Sarah Pasquali
woman who looks
nothing like Jordana

In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Optimum Releasing

8.712 ft +12 frames

A Turtle's Tale Sammy's Adventures

Belgium/France/USA 2009

Director: Ben Stassen

Voices of Gemma Arterton, Dominic

Cooper, John Hurt, Kayvan Novak

Certificate U 85m 36s

The critics' complaint about 3D's ubiquity in family films in 2010 was that it was often extraneous (*Toy Story 3*, for example, was as immersive and enjoyable without it). However, frequent bouts of pop-up and pop-out spectacle are this gentle and turgid tale's only selling point. Director Ben Stassen, whose background is in CGI 'ride' films, subjects his globetrotting turtle hero Sammy to a succession of vertiginous trips aboard a spouting whale, a whirling octopus and a high-climbing eagle. But since these punctuate a thin, dawdling narrative, frailer than the rickety raft on which Sammy seeks his lost turtle love Shelly, their impact makes for momentary gasps rather than heart-in-mouth sequences. Children used to the rollercoaster gag-fuelled dynamism of, say, the *Ice Age* series, will soon be drumming their heels.

Stassen, whose human and turtle characters are oddly and not attractively stylised, creates by contrast a fabulous, almost photoreal underwater world, whose coral forests and sudden depth plunges captivate. But neither he nor screenwriter Domonic Paris has learned how to create compelling animated characters since their insect adventure *Fly Me to the Moon* (2008). Shy hero, sweet heroine and cocky best friend Ray have a generic feel, amplified by their fuzzy, approximate mouth-movements, which allow for multi-language versioning.

For the UK, Dominic Cooper and Gemma Arterton perform fine if forgettable turns as the squeaky hero and his breathy, perky love-interest. Sammy's 50-year transglobal trip around the oceans looking for love and the 'secret passage' to Antarctica, while human eco-upsets (oil tanker spills, shoals of deathly plastic bags, illegal whaling) impinge on his plans, lacks the propulsive quest and punchy encounters that drive an animated classic such as *Finding Nemo* (2003). Mild thrills, a slender story and a green message simply won't suffice. Films, rather like turtles, make progress only when they stick their necks out.

♦♦ Kate Stables

CREDITS

Directed by

Ben Stassen

Produced by

Ben Stassen

Caroline van Iseghem

Domonic Paris

Mimi Maynard

Gina Gallo

Screenplay

Domonic Paris

Story

Ben Stassen

Domonic Paris

Art Direction

Jérémie Degrouson

Music Composed by

Ramin Djawadi

©Around the World in

50 Years S.p.r.l.

Production

Companies

StudioCanal presents

an nWave Pictures

production in

association with

Illustrata Pictures

Supported by Flanders

Audiovisual Fund

With the support of Tax
Shelter of the Belgian
Federal Government
In association with
Motion Investment
Group, Fortis Film Fund,
Taxshelter.be
With the support of
Centre du Cinéma et de
l'Audiovisuel de la
Communauté française
de Belgique and
télédiffuseurs wallons

Executive Producers

nWave Pictures:

Eric Dillens

UK Version Crew:

Danny Perkins

Producer UK Version

Soledad Gatti-Pascual

Line Producers

Lynn Cohen

UK Version Crew:

Giorgia Lo Savio

Film Accountants

Pol Delgouffe

Jan Morrison

Maria Leonore

Rodriguez Alvarez

Didier Legay

Latifa Gharbi

Post-production

Supervisors

Rick Gordon

James Marke

UK Version Crew:

Alistair Hopkins

Voice Director

UK Version Crew:

Ray Gillon

Script Supervisor

Scott Malchus

Casting Director

UK Version Crew:

Shaheen Baig

Animation Supervisor

Dirk De Loose

Animators

Grégory Naud

Brecht Debaene

Guillaume Roux

Benjamin Mousquet

Jack Vandenbroele

Oliver Berry

Evan Coolen

Marc-Antoine

Deleplanque

Sébastien Ebzant

Lionel Hautier

Marco La Torre

Jimmy Marteyn

Rahul Patil

Peter Segers

Yvan Verhoeven

Eitan Vineshtock

Effects

Supervisors:

Jérôme Escobar

François Coulon

Technical Directors:

Oliver De Cadrmeier

Carlo Giesa

François Coulon

Fur Technical Directors:

Oliver De Cadrmeier

Sylvain Nouveau

Cloth Technical

Directors:

Carlo Giesa

Fernando Borges

Effects Artists:

Benoit Nicodeme

Oliver De Cadrmeier

Mathias Capdet

Carlo Giesa

Akshay Kothari

Yannick Lastas

Sylvain Nouveau

Fernando Borges

Sachin Saxena

Roland Franck

Arup Sanyal

Frédéric Convert

Norbert Cretinon

Teresa Alvarez Pino

CGI Producer

Caroline van Iseghem

Lighting

Supervisors:

Eric Paquet

Curtis NZ Edwards

Sequence Leads:

Othman Haddi

Frédéric Cervini

Ronald Van Rij

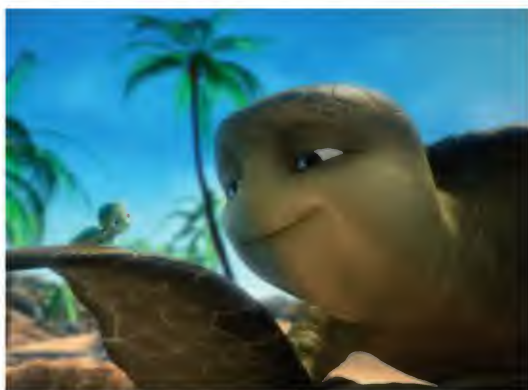
Jos Claesen

</



LastExitToNowhere.com

T-SHIRTS AND OTHER APPAREL INSPIRED BY THE LOVE OF GREAT FILMS • MADE BY FILM LOVERS FOR FILM LOVERS.



Little and large: 'A Turtle's Tale Sammy's Adventures'

Sound Design
Yves Renard
Lele
Recordists
Pauline Malterme
Jean-Stephane Garbe
US Version Crew:
Rob McIntyre
Brian Magrum
Bill Devine
Voice Recording
UK Version Crew:
Mark Benson
Naomi Dandridge
Mix
Luc Thomas
Mix Supervisor
Pierre 'Lele' Lebecque
Recording Mixer
UK Version Crew:
Kath Pollard

VOICE CAST

English language version – UK
Gemma Arterton
Shelly
Dominic Cooper
Sammy
John Hurt
old Sammy
Christine Bleakley
Sandra
Kayvan Novak
Fluffy
Robert Sheehan
Ray
Ben Bishop
VW driver
Julia Boecker
female hatchling
Ben Bishop
male hatchling 1
Ray Gillon
male hatchling 3
Ben Bishop
Ollie
Geoff Searle
Jacko
Ben Bishop
loggerhead turtle 1/
loggerhead turtle
Geoff Searle
Ray Gillon
loggerhead turtles
Anjella Mackintosh
loggerhead turtle 2
Geoff Searle
loggerhead turtle 3/
loggerhead turtle 4

Ben Bishop
loggerhead turtle 5
Geoff Searle
loggerhead turtle 6
Ben Bishop
loggerhead turtle 7
Geoff Searle
loggerhead turtle 8
Ben Bishop
Geoff Searle
Ray Gillon
crowd
Kayvan Novak
Slim
Ben Bishop
fisherman 1
Ray Gillon
fisherman 2
Melanie Cooper
Snow
Julia Boecker
baby Buddha
Anjella Mackintosh
Vera
Ben Bishop
police 1
Geoff Searle
hippie
Ray Gillon
hippie 2/police 2
Ben Bishop
large seal/green
turtle/old male turtle
Anjella Mackintosh
old female turtle
Kayvan Novak
seagull
Geoff Searle
whale/Greenpeace
worker 1
Ray Gillon
Greenpeace worker 2/
Greenpeace worker 3
Ben Bishop
Ben
Ray Gillon
lab worker
Georgia Sweeney
female turtle 1
Stephanie Powter
female turtle 2
Sohm Kapila
Rita
Stephanie Powter
young female turtle
Georgia Sweeney
female turtle
Kayvan Novak
Robbie
Geoff Searle
hatchling turtle

English language version – USA
Anthony Anderson
Ray
Ed Begley Jr
Greenpeace worker
Pat Carroll
old female turtle
Tim Curry
Fluffy
Stacy Keach
Grandpa Sammy
Yuri Lowenthal
young Sammy
Kathy Griffin
Vera
Melanie Griffith
Snow
Jenny McCarthy
Shelly
Charlie Adler
Slim
Gigi Perreau
whale
Roxanne Reese
Rita
Cam Clark
seagull
Darren Capozzi
Robbie
Alan Sherman
old turtle
Sophia Bailely
Sandra
Scott Menville
Jacko
Yuri Lowenthal
Ollie
James Fredrick
fisherman 1
WK Stratton
fisherman 2
'Wolfy' Hutton
baby Buddha
Pam Adlon
female turtle 1
Kierstin Koppel
female turtle 2
David Joffe
lab worker
Richard Jannone
policeman 1
Tim Dadabo
policeman 2
Charlie Schlatter
hippie
Al Rodriego
Ben, VW driver
S.Scott Bullock
large seal

Don Fullilove
green turtle
Joey Naber
Greenpeace worker 2
Carlos A. McCullers
hatchling Ray
Isabelle Fuhrman
hatchling Shelly
Olivier Paris
loggerhead
Eric Unger
Leo Howard
Grant Klemann
Sam Riels
Krista Williams
Heather Trzyna
hatchlings
Keegan Michael
Thomas
baby hatchling
Steve Kramer
Keith Anthony
Don Fullilove
Steve Staley
Archie Hahn
Cam Clark
Al Rodriego
Joseph Leo Bwari
Scott Menville
Doug Capozzi
Doug Rouhier
Adam Wylie
David Cowgill
James Fredrick
Mimi Maynard
Karen Strassman
Bridget Hoffman
Brianne Brozey
Jessica Gee-George
Jackie Gonneau
Lara Cody
Philece Sampler
Mona Marshall
Cindy Robison
loop group

French/Belgian language version
Dany Boon
Samy
Olivia Ruiz
Shelly
Élie Semoun
Ray/seagull/octopus
Guillaume Gallienne
Alphonse the cat

Dolby Digital/DTS
In Colour
[2.35:1]
3D

Distributor
Optimum Releasing

7,704 ft +0 frames

French/Belgian theatrical title
Le Voyage
extraordinaire de Samy
International English-language title
Sammy's Adventures
The Secret Passage

Unknown

USA/United Kingdom/Germany/
France 2011

Director: Jaume Collet-Serra

With Liam Neeson, Diane Kruger,
January Jones, Aidan Quinn

Certificate 12A 113m 6s

The pitch is obvious: Liam Neeson is *Taken* on another slumming quest in the Continental underworld, with who-am-I psychological puzzler elements proven bankable in *Inception* and *Shutter Island*, his 'Dr Martin Harris' fighting his "war between being told who you are and knowing who you are". The package is shrewd and opportunistic, the execution intent, adroit and atmospheric. Harris, barred from the posh Hotel Adlon where he once had reservations, descends into a network of taxi garages, subway underpasses, sex shops in pink-and-blue neon and crummy suburban buildings. The slushy-snow late-November Berlin gets into your socks.

The polyglot cast includes Bruno Ganz and Frank Langella as old Cold Warriors Ernst Jürgen and Rodney Cole – they get a meandering face-off scene, though Ganz's finest moment is his glint of pleasure when citing his Stasi credentials ("That's what I was really known for – details.") German Diane Kruger plays Gina, a Bosnian immigrant saving up to buy papers – her identity, like Harris's, is officially in flux. Harris, with nowhere else to go, asks to crash in her garret flat, but hints at commiseration and attraction between them are not much developed. Neeson sustains a tone of livid bewilderment – sometimes touching in its nakedness, as when his wife first publicly denies knowing the badly dressed, harried 'Martin Harris' who accosts her at the lavish reception and the big man gasps "You're embarrassing me." His seriousness, and the unforgiving schedule of the narrative, exclude stop-offs for flirtation, and so the suggested triangle of Harris, Gina and his wife (January Jones's icy ambivalence is blank-sheet) is shown less care than global-political macguffins involving Arab princes and corn innovations.

Unknown connects to a lineage, leading through Hitchcock and Polanski's *Frantic*, of harried Americans lost abroad, playing dangerous games with instructions printed in a foreign language. The director, Jaume Collet-Serra, is an émigré to the California industry, with a pedigree in commercial/music-video work. In the US, the Spaniard has made two awfully good, entirely disreputable horror pictures for producer Joel Silver's trashy imprint Dark Castle Entertainment – *House of Wax* (2005) and *Orphan* (2009) – and anyone looking past the 'remake' stigma to appreciate the sicko set pieces and imaginative production design of *Wax* could tell that this Catalan viewed genre moviemaking as more than a career waiting-room where one listlessly rearranges clichés.

For his first actioner, Collet-Serra attacks the opportunity of a classic car

chase, articulately shot and cut, and built in distinct movements. Harris and Gina's taxi fishtails into an intersection among froth-spewing beer kegs; wipers slash the windshield clear just in time to reveal an incoming head-on ram. Two vehicles reverse at full speed, side by side, held apart by the columns of an outdoor arcade; coming to its end they turn out together with *pas de deux* neatness – then start shouldering each other towards an oncoming tram.

Collet-Serra, whose ability is confirmed if not exceeded here, has shown a knack for flamboyant finales with the proportional-dwarf twist of *Orphan* and *Wax's House of Usher*-style meltdown. Another literal bringing down the house finishes his latest, but by this time the vague relationships are liabilities that can't be ignored – the narrative discovers no new identity once the *Unknown* is found out. ♦♦ **Nick Pinkerton**

CREDITS

Directed by
Jaume Collet-Serra
Produced by
Joel Silver
Leonard Goldberg
Andrew Rona
Screenplay
Oliver Butcher
Stephen Cornwell
Based upon the novel
[*Hors de moi/Out of My Head*] by Didier Van Cauwelaert
Director of Photography
Flavio Labiano
Edited by
Tim Alverson
Production Designer
Richard Bridgland
MUSIC
John Ottman
Alexander Rudd

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Production Companies
Warner Bros. Pictures presents in association with Dark Castle Entertainment a Panda production
Financed in association with StudioCanal
Produced at Studio Babelsberg
A Horticus UK Ltd.
Zwölfe Babelsberg Film GmbH, StudioCanal S.A.
DFFF – Deutscher Filmförderfonds, MBB – Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg co-production
Executive Producers
Susan Downey
Steve Richards
Sarah Meyer
Peter McAleese
Co-producers
Richard Minisch
Adam Kuhn
Charlie Woebcken
Christoph Fisser
Henning Moltner
Olivier Courson
Ronald Halpern
Leonard Glowinski
Associate Producers
Aaron Auch
Ethan Erwin
Unit Production Manager
Michael Scheel
Production Manager
2nd Unit:
Klaus Spinnler
Production Supervisor
Alan James Wands
Production Co-ordinators
Damian Anderson
Silvia Lindner
Stephen Bender
2nd Unit:
Katja Zaus

Financial Controller
Alistair Thompson
Location Managers
Klaus Grosse
Darrelmann
2nd Unit:
Henrik Greisner
Post-production Supervisor
Emma Zee
2nd Unit Director
Marc Wolff
Assistant Directors
1st: Max Keene
2nd: Matt Baker
2nd Unit:
1st: Richard Styles
2nd: Ralf Eisenmann
Miniatures Shoot
1st: Ben Burt
Script Supervisors
Morag Cameron
2nd Unit:
Sonja Zoe Simjonovic
Casting
Lucinda Syson
Germany:
Simone Bar
Camera Operators
A: Peter Robertson
B: Terence Bulley
B: Marcus Pohlus
2nd Unit Underwater
A: Terence Bulley
B: Jan Hinrich Hoffmann
2nd Unit:
C: Christof Wahl
Miniatures Shoot
C: Karl Morgan
Chief Lighting Technicians
Helmut Prein
2nd Unit:
Ron Rakowski
Key Grips
Michael Müller
2nd Unit:
Helge Felgendreher
Visual Effects Supervisor:
Adam Howard
Producer:
Tim Field
Visual Effects Unit Miniatures Shoot
Supervisor:
Steve Begg
Cameraman:
Peter Talbot
Digital Visual Effects
Prime Focus Film
Visual Effects
LipSync Post
WebVFX
Molinare
Pixton
MPC
Special Effects Supervisor:
Mickey Kirsten
Co-ordinator:
Mario Duthe
Miniatures Shoot
Supervisor:
Mike Kelt
Co-ordinator:
Colin Foster
Miniature Construction
Artem Ltd

SYNOPSIS California, 1959. Newly hatched turtle Sammy rescues girl turtle Shelly from a seagull but is left stranded on the beach. Floating across the Pacific for a decade with new pal Ray, he experiences an oil-tanker disaster before being captured in a trawler's net and then washed up in a beach commune of kind hippies. Sammy meets Shelly again and saves her from a shark; they agree to travel the world together. Looking for a passage to the 'ice ocean', they become separated in the Panama Canal. Sammy tours the South Atlantic on a discarded fridge, seeking Shelly. Menaced by whalers in the ice ocean, he is rescued by eco-warriors. Shelly is also aboard their vessel, but is released from their animal sanctuary before Sammy can make contact. Sammy rescues Ray from an underwater container and they go to find Shelly in the mating grounds. After staging a fake 'rescue' with a friendly shark, Sammy and Shelly are reunited. Years later, Sammy shepherds his grandchildren across the beach where he hatched.

SYNOPSIS Berlin, the present. American botanist Dr Martin Harris and his wife arrive in the city, where he is scheduled to speak at a biotechnology summit. Jumping into a cab by himself, he is knocked cold when the vehicle suddenly plunges off a bridge. The female cab driver rescues him. When Harris comes to in hospital, he has no ID and no memory of the accident. He returns to the hotel where the summit is being held, but his wife claims not to recognise him, and calls for help from another man, who claims to be the real Dr Martin Harris, and who can recite Harris's life in enough detail to convince German scientist Professor Bressler. Confused, 'Harris' returns to the hospital, where he narrowly escapes an assassin. Looking for explanations and confirmation of his identity, he seeks help from the cab driver, a Bosnian immigrant named Gina, and a private detective, Ernst, formerly of the East German Stasi. Hitmen invade Gina's apartment, where 'Harris' has taken shelter; he escapes. Ernst, meanwhile, is contacted by Rodney Cole, an American colleague of 'Martin Harris'. Ernst recognises Cole as an old assassin. Cole reveals that 'Harris' and 'wife' were a team hired to kill Professor Bressler and steal his research, but 'Harris' began to believe his cover story after the taxi accident. Now remembering, the reformed 'Harris' rushes with Gina to the hotel to prevent the bomb blast meant for Bressler. The hotel is evacuated in time; 'Harris' kills his double. Having purchased new identities, he and Gina board a train together, leaving Berlin.

Supervising Art Director

Andreas Olshausen

Art Directors

Cornelia Ott

Anja Müller

Stephen Dobric

Set Decorator

Bernhard Henrich

2nd Unit Underwater

Set Decoration

Peggy Dix

Prop Masters

Alexander Lambriev

Oliver Kuhlmann

Construction Manager

Marco Pressler

Costume Designer

Ruth Myers

Costume Supervisors

UK:

William McPhail

Germany:

Meike Schlegel

Wardrobe

Dorothea Sooth

Chief Make-up/Hair Designer

Graham Johnston

Make-up Artists

Lorna McGowan

Pamela Gruijic

Susanne Kasper

Charlotte Chang

2nd Unit:

Paula Leupold

Kathrin Schneider

Bettina Hohensee

End Credits

Fugitive Studios

Music Conducted by

Nolan Livesay

Jason Livesay

Music Orchestrated by

Jason Livesay

Nolan Livesay

John Ottman

Music Supervisor

Andy Ross

Soundtrack

"Elevation" – Sultana

Ensemble; "Tchiribim" –

Watcha Clan; "Blue

Monday (Oliver Lang &

Rob Blazye Remix)" –

New Order; "Reflections"

– Buchholz & Jessie

Shapiro; "Quartet Major"

– Paul Durham

Music Consultant

Matt Biffa

Production Sound

Mixer

Colin Nicholson

2nd Unit Sound Mixer

Hunor Schauschitz

Re-recording Mixers

Chris Burdon

Mark Taylor

Supervising Sound

Editor

Oliver Tamey

Stunt Co-ordinators

Oliver Schneider

German:

François Doge

Volkhard Buff

Fight Choreographer

Oliver Schneider

CAST

Liam Neeson

Dr Martin Harris

Diane Kruger

Gina

January Jones

Elizabeth Harris

Aidan Quinn

Martin B

Bruno Ganz

Ernst Jürgen

Frank Langella

Rodney Cole

Sebastian Koch

Professor Bressler

Oliver Schneider

Smith

Stipe Erceg

Jones

Rainer Bock

Herr Strauss

Mido Hamada

Prince Shada

Clint Dyer

Biko

Karl Markovics

Dr Farge

Eva Löbau

Nurse Gretchen

Helen Wiebenson

Laurel Bressler

Merle Wiebenson

Lily Bressler

Adnan Maral

Turkish taxi driver

Torsten Michaelis

airport taxi driver

Rainer Sellien

Petra Hartung

control room detectives

Michael Baral

Sanny van Heteren

Hotel Adlon receptionists

Ricardo Dümer

Hotel Adlon doorman

Marlon Putzke

Hotel Adlon bellhop

Herbert Olschok

Hans Brandt

Karla Trippel

hostel cashier

Petra Schmidt-Schaller

immigration officer

Annabelle Mandeng

TV anchor

Janina Flieger

university receptionist

Fritz Roth

taxi depot manager

Heike Hanold-Lynch

lost & found clerk

Matthias Weidenhöfer

hotel control room guard

Kida Khodr Ramadan

café owner

Peter Becker

hotel guard

Vladimir Pavic

club bouncer

Oliver Stolz

river Samaritan

Oliver Lang

club DJ

Sebastian Stielke

Brandt's assistant

Dolby Digital/DTS/

SDDS

In Colour

[2.35:1]

Distributor

Optimum Releasing

10,179 ft +5 frames

German theatrical title

Unknown Identity

French theatrical title

Sans identité

The Ward

USA 2010

Director: John Carpenter

With Amber Heard,

Mamie Gummer, Danielle

Panabaker, Laura-Leigh

Certificate 15 88m 26s

In the 1990s John Carpenter was off form, delivering a series of disappointments (*Village of the Damned*, *Escape from LA*, *Vampires*) until his theatrical options seemed to dry up with the weak *Ghosts of Mars* in 2001. Since then he has only directed two episodes of the *Masters of Horror* cable television show, even as his early, superior work has been revisited in a series of ill-advised remakes (*Assault on Precinct 13*, *The Fog*, *Halloween*).

Though *The Ward* bears the possessory credit Carpenter has insisted on from the beginning of his career, it isn't a story the director has generated (it's an original screenplay by Michael and Shawn Rasmussen) or developed. It is ostensibly an entry in two current horror trends – the 'subjective reality' mystery, which often has an asylum or psychiatric setting (cf. *Shutter Island*, *Identity*, *Gothika*, *Session 9*), and the 'avenging ghost girl' body-count picture (cf. the *Ring* and *Grudge* films). But, as the period setting suggests, its roots go back to 1960s efforts such as Sam Fuller's *Shock Corridor* and the Robert Bloch-scripted remake *The Cabinet of Caligari*. It is to Carpenter's credit that he disguises – well beyond several rival films – the not unprecedented set of revelations which settle all the mysteries.

Carpenter has always been good with young performers – *Halloween* was influential not just as a horror film, but as a teen movie. Here, working with a group of young actresses who have genre credentials but aren't yet familiar enough to be labelled junior scream queens, he gets fine work from everyone. Amber Heard, expanding on her ambiguous 'final girl' performance in *All the Boys Love Mandy Lane* (2006), makes a strong Carpenter heroine. The compulsions that have landed her in the asylum are also the traits that might allow her to survive and escape: if Kristen were a more complete person, she couldn't face the monster. Amid the one-neurosis-



Disoriented: Amber Heard

apiece rest of the group, Mamie Gummer is especially striking as the 'penultimate girl', who stays on screen because her peculiar intensity is so engaging that she earns a position beyond simply explaining what's going on.

In Carpenter's absence, the horror film has picked up a set of new mannerisms. If *The Ward* is a throwback to a more classical, gothic style, it's also a refreshing change: personalities are fractured here – as established in an outstanding titles montage – but not the editing. This doesn't quite offer the windscreenshaped Panavision of most Carpenter films, but the camera prowls through the near-derelect asylum (like several other madhouse movies, this uses a decommissioned mental institution – Eastern Washington State Hospital for the Insane – as its prime location) like an extra character, creeping up on the unwary and drawing attention to corners of the frame where surprises lurk. The only aspect that seems hokey is the rubbery zombie-look ghost, which seems a little too much like a holdover from a mode of 1980s horror (*House*, for example) few would want to see revived.

A modestly effective little chiller rather than a new classic of horror, this is still a welcome return from a genre filmmaker who here weds technique to gravitas.

◆ Kim Newman



Broken flowers: Liam Neeson

CREDITS

Directed by
John Carpenter
Produced by
Doug Mankoff
Peter Block
Mike Marcus
Andrew Spaulding
Written by
Michael Rasmussen
Shawn Rasmussen
Director of Photography
Yaron Orbach
Editor
Patrick McMahon
Production Designer
Paul Peters
Music by/Orchestration by
Mark Kilian

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Production Companies
FilmNation
Entertainment in association with
Premiere Picture present an Echo Lake Entertainment production in association with A Bigger Boat
Filmed with funding assistance from Washington Filmworks
Executive Producers
David Rogers
Adam Betteridge
Rich Cowan
LA Unit Producer
Hans Ritter
Co-producer
Jessica Stamen
Associate Producer
Amanda Essick
Unit Production Manager
Rich Cowan
Production Co-ordinators
Mary C. Russell
LA Unit:
Cory Myler
Production Accountants
Brad Harland
Melody Deatherage
Location Manager
Pete Moroz
Post-production Supervisor
Jason A. Payne
Assistant Directors
1st: Lynn Węgenka
2nd: Adam C. Boyd
LA Unit
1st: Milos Milicevic
2nd: Ivan Kraljevic
Script Supervisors
Barbara A. Brown
LA Unit:
Jan McWilliams
Casting
Pam Dixon Mickelson
Spokane:
Nike Imoru
A Camera/Steadicam Operator
Charles Papert
Gaffers
Mike Vukas
LA Unit:
Steve Mathis
Key Grips
Gregory D. Smith
LA Unit:
Pat Heffernan
Visual Effects Supervisor
Jason McKee
Visual Effects
North by Northwest
Entertainment
Special Effects
LA Unit Supervisor:
David Wayne
Co-ordinator:
Casey Pritchett
Set Decorators
Rachel M. Thomson
LA Unit:
Amy Wells
LA Unit Propmaster
Dutch Merrick
Construction Co-ordinators
Steve Broussard
LA Unit:
Jamie Archer
Costume Designer
Lisa Caryl

LA Unit Costume Supervisor
Bonnie Stauch
Key Make-up Artists
Trista Jordan
LA Unit:
Heba Thorisdottir
Make-up
Emily Chisholm
Shalaine Howell
Make-up Effects
Gregory Nicotero
Howard Berger
Kevin Wasner
Key Hair Stylists
Jennifer Popochock
LA Unit:
Raissa Patton
Main Title Design
Shadowplay Studio
Title Designers:
Garth Smith
Jenny Lee
Soundtrack
"Run Baby Run (Back into My Arms)" – The Newbeats; "Andante" arranged by Ron Ronsted; "Orchestral Suite No.3 'Air on a G String'" by Johann Sebastian Bach; "Così fan tutte" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – Editi Horak
Sound Designers
Leslie Schatz
Javier Bennassar
Sound Mixers
Tom Taylor
LA Unit:
Steve Weiss
Jerry Wolfe
Re-recording Mixers
Chris David
Tom Marks
Supervising Sound Editor
Javier Bennassar
Stunt Co-ordinators
Jeff Imada
John Casino

CAST

Amber Heard
Kristen
Marnie Gummer
Emily
Danielle Panabaker
Sarah
Laura-Leigh
Zoey
Lyndsy Fonseca
Ins
Mika Boorem
Alice
Jared Harris
Dr Stringer
Sali Sayer
Tammy
Susanna Burney
Nurse Lundt
Dan Anderson
Roy
Sean Cook
Jimmy
Jillian Kramer
ghost Alice
Mark Chamberlin
Mr Hudson
Andrea L. Petty
Mrs Hudson
Tracey Schornick
cop 1
Kent Kimball
cop 2
Joseph O'Shaughnessy
receptionist
Patrick Treadway
2nd floor nurse
Bev Holsclaw
admitting nurse
Sydney Sweeney
young Alice

Dolby Digital In Colour [2.35:1]

Distributor
Warner Bros Distributors (UK)

7,959 ft +0 frames

Onscreen title
John Carpenter's The Ward

You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger

Spain/USA/United Kingdom 2010
Director: Woody Allen
With Anthony Hopkins, Gemma Jones, Naomi Watts, Josh Brolin

Nice work if you can get it. At 75, Woody Allen continues to make a feature a year, assembling top actors and technicians and securing hands-off funding (unless the condition is shooting in a picturesque European city). No sooner is one film hitting theatres than another (*Midnight in Paris*) is announced as the curtain-raiser to the Cannes festival. While Manoel de Oliveira may keep up a pace to match, Allen reliably gets distribution in Europe and the United States, and it's easy to feel a little numbed by the unremitting output of varying quality and commitment. Who can keep up with it, much less critique a director who beats you to the punch by titling a film *Whatever Works*?

For several years now, Allen-watchers have clucked and murmured in a connoisseurship of expectation and disappointment – a ritual perhaps still conditioned by a narrow sense that a comedian either hits or misses, with anything halfway being confusing or worse. The Oliveira comparison proves surprisingly apt, not just because I've heard Allen put forth as a masterful modernist no less than Godard, but also because one plotline in his latest faintly recalls the romantic voyeurism of *Eccentricities of a Blonde-Haired Girl* (2009), as blocked London writer Roy (Josh Brolin) pursues a woman he spies undressing in the window across from his apartment.

Complications arise, but mainly in illustration of Allen's fatalism concerning his married and recently unmarried characters' attempts to find happiness. The dishevelled Roy gets the girl (Freida Pinto), despite her engagement and his own marriage to Sally (Naomi Watts), but his hunger to finish his book leads him down a troubling road of deception, theft and possibly worse. Before that point, Sally's laudable effort to keep them afloat by taking a job at a gallery results in a crush on her boss (Antonio Banderas) which fizzles before catching (with an awkward diffidence that's spot-on).

You Will Meet is not in the antic or neurotic vein of Allen's comedies, contrary to some critics' foregone conclusions and indeed the film's own voiceover, which delivers God's-eye narration with a grating, near-disastrous chumminess. The biggest sources of humour are not especially funny, simply because of an underlying sense of disappointment and even desperation. Sally's rich father Alfie (sleepwalking Anthony Hopkins), for example, has left her mother Helena and taken up with a good-time-gal hooker (Lucy Punch) in a doomed match. Helena, meanwhile, flutters round to Roy and Sally's to tipple and

nag – in scenes shot by Vilmos Zsigmond with a tensely shifting camera – and she's partly the amusingly impolitic mother-in-law, one who here slavishly believes in a psychic's off-the-cuff pronouncements. But, as played by Gemma Jones, she's also a woman whose irritating side expresses in a roundabout way her own anger about where her life has gone (or not gone).

In fact, where Allen takes his characters – Roy and Helena specifically – might be the film's boldest move, leaving us in a precarious position regarding two people we might ordinarily see taking a tumble. As so often, Allen's film has a hermetic feel, which saps our investment in the people's lives, as do the sometimes unnervingly matter-of-fact readings by Hopkins and Brolin. But though Woody's legend still sustains his career, it's a work with an intriguingly downbeat irony that might be seen more clearly by forgetting the name above the title. ♥♦ **Nicolas Rapold**

CREDITS

Directed by
Woody Allen
Produced by
Letty Aronson
Stephen Tenenbaum
Jaume Roures
Written by
Woody Allen
Director of Photography
Vilmos Zsigmond
Editor
Alisa Lepselter
Production Designer
Jim Clay

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Executive Producer
Javier Méndez
Co-executive Producer
Jack Rollins

Co-producers
Helen Robin
Nicky Kentish Barnes
Associate Producer
Mercedes Camero
Unit Production Managers
Tori Parry
Helen Robin
Production Co-ordinators
Francesca Dowd
Scott Kordish
Accountants
Louise O'Malley
Pietro Lorino Jr
Location Manager
Michael Harm
Assistant Directors
1st: Ben Howarth
2nd: Olivia Lloyd
Script Supervisor
Kim Armitage
Casting
Juliet Taylor
Patricia DiCerto
Gail Stevens
Camera/Steadicam Operator
Peler Cavaciuti
Gaffer
John Higgins
Key Grip
Kevin Fraser
Special Effects Supervisor
Stuart Brisdon
Special Effects
United Special Effects Ltd
Art Director
Dominic Masters
Set Decorator
John Bush
Props Buyer
Gill Farr

Property Master
Alan Bailey
Construction Manager
Paul Duff
Costume Designer
Beatrix Aruna Pasztor
Costume Supervisor
Clare Spragge
Make-up/Hair Designer
Sharon Martin
Make-up/Hair Artist
Uxue Laguardia
Soundtrack
"When You Wish upon a Star" – Leon Redbone; "When My Baby Smiles at Me"; "Only You (And You Alone)"; "My Sin" – Tom Sharpteen & His Orlandos; "If I Had You" – Benny Goodman & His Orchestra; "Grave Assai" from "Guitar Quintet in D Major" "Fandango" "G448" by Luigi Boccherini – Tali Roth; "I'll See You in My Dreams" – The Eddy Davis Trio featuring Conal Fowkes; "Let Your Body Move" – Marc Ferran, Michael McGregor; "Serenade No.6 in D Major K.239 III Rondo Allegretto" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – Sir Charles Mackerras, Prague Orchestra; "Tu che a Dio spiegasti l'ali (Lucia di Lammermoor/Act 3)" by Gaetano Donizetti – Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Luciano Pavarotti, Nicolai Ghiaurov; "Laser Luxe" – Silver/Sir Realist; "Mais si l'amour" – Giulia y Los Tellarini; "I Never Loved You" – Scott Nickoley, Jamie Dunlap
Production Sound Mixer
Peter Glossop
Re-recording Mixer
Lee Dichter
Supervising Sound Editor
Robert Hein

CAST

Antonio Banderas
Greg
Josh Brolin
Roy Channing
Anthony Hopkins
Alfie Shebritch
Gemma Jones
Helena Shebritch
Freida Pinto
Dia
Lucy Punch
Charmaine
Naomi Watts
Sally Channing
Pauline Collins
Cristal
Rupert Frazer
jogging partner

Kelly Harrison
personal trainer
Eleanor Gecks
rollerblading friend
Fenella Woolgar
Jane
Ewen Bremner
Henry Strangler
Christian McKay
Philip Glenister
Jonathan Ryland
Pearce Quigley
Neil Jackson
Alan
Lynda Baron
Alfie's date
Robert Portal
jewellery shop salesman
Lucy Punch
Charmaine
Jim Piddick
Peter Wicklow
Celia Imrie
Enid Wicklow
Roger Ashton-Griffiths
Jonathan
Anna Friel
Ins
Theo James
Ray
Christopher Fulford
Ray's friend
Johnny Harris
Ray's friend
Alex Macqueen
Malcolm Dodds
Anupam Kher
Meera Syal
Dia's parents
Joanna David
Geoffrey Hutchings
Alan's parents
Natalie Walker
Alan's sister
Shaheen Khan
Dia's aunt
Amanda Lawrence
medium
Zak Orth
narrator

Dolby Digital In Colour [1.85:1]

Distributor
Warner Bros
Distributors (UK)

Castilian Spanish theatrical title
Conocerás al hombre de tus sueños
Catalan Spanish theatrical title
Conexerás l'home dels teus somnis

SYNOPSIS London, the present. Roy and Sally's marriage comes under strain as he struggles to write his second book. Sally's mother Helena turns up regularly to drink and nag; since her husband Alfie walked out on her, she slavishly follows the advice of a psychic, Cristal. Roy takes an interest in a woman, Dia, he spies undressing across the courtyard. Alfie starts a relationship with a young call girl, Charmaine, whom he spoils. Sally takes a job at a gallery and falls for handsome boss Greg.

Roy and Dia begin an affair, which ends her engagement to another man. Charmaine receives attention from younger men, making Alfie suspicious, especially when she falls pregnant. Sally declares her affections to Greg, but he demurs; it turns out that he is involved with her artist friend.

When a writer friend apparently dies in an accident, Roy steals the man's finished manuscript and gains success. Alfie tries in vain to patch things up with Helena, who has taken up with a sympathetic occult bookstore owner. Roy learns that his writer friend is in fact only comatose, and it is implied that he will commit foul play to cover his tracks.

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Czech mating

Geoffrey Macnab *relishes the humour and humanity of Milos Forman's film about love in a Cold War climate*

A Blonde in Love

Milos Forman; Czechoslovakia 1965; Second Run/Region 2; Certificate 15; 81 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: booklet with essay by Michael Brooke

The Czech writer-director Ivan Passer (who co-scripted 'A Blonde in Love') tells some very colourful stories about his school days at the King George College in Podebrady, a small spa town to the east of Prague. Here, a 13th-century fortress was turned into a boarding school in 1945; the founder was Lady Baden-Powell, wife of the man who started the Scout Movement, and the 70 pupils included problem kids, war orphans and the sons of foreign diplomats. Milos Forman was there, as was Václav Havel (future president of the Czech Republic but a keen student boxer in those days), the Polish film-maker Jerzy Skolimowski and the animator Paul Fierlinger. Forman, Passer recalls, was a ferociously competitive child who once challenged him to a duel to see who could stand in a corner with a book on their head for the longest. They stood for hours, neither one prepared to lose.

Watching 'A Blonde in Love' (released by Second Run in a restored, digitally remastered version), it's easy to be reminded of Passer's yarns about the young Forman. It plays like a cross between a 1960s New Wave film and an Ealing comedy. As in Ealing films, there is a wry, subversive attitude towards bureaucracy: Zruc, the factory town where the story is largely set, has a ratio of 16 women to every man. In a wonderful early scene, pettifogging civil servants discuss the town's problems – two thousand girls live there, all without boyfriends. "Girls, rosebuds! You understand? Youth," an official explains to the Comrade Mayor. That's why a consignment of soldiers is sent to the town for a special dance. To the girls' disappointment, however, they are all reservists – middle-aged, overweight and tending to baldness.

Cinematographer Miroslav Ondříček shoots the dance in *vérité* style. The camera darts between the tables where soldiers and girls sit warily opposite one another. At one point, a bespectacled and very tubby soldier takes off his wedding ring and hides it in his pocket as he prepares to dance with one of the girls; almost inevitably, the ring falls out of his pocket, and the camera follows it as it rolls across the dance floor, through a sea of legs, and ends up under the chair of one of the women. The soldier crawls after it and ends up beneath the table, rummaging around beside the women's



Girls' night out: Hana Brejchová (left) as Andula in 'A Blonde in Love'

It plays like a cross between a 1960s New Wave film and an Ealing comedy

feet – the humour is wonderfully deadpan and understated.

It's just one example of Forman's genius for homing in on seemingly minor and banal details that turn out to be both comic and very revealing. The scene in which the 'blonde', Andula (Hana Brejchová), makes love with the young quaffed-up musician Milda (Vladimír Pucholt) is shot in a surprisingly frank way, but there is nothing overwrought or voyeuristic about it. Forman leavens what could have seemed an awkward moment by putting as much emphasis on Milda's hapless attempts to close the blinds as on the lovemaking. "It was," Ken Loach has said, describing what enraptured him about the films of Forman and his contemporaries, "the unmelodramatic way they observed people with some sense of shared humanity."

'A Blonde in Love' is a deceptive film, since the world it depicts with such gentle irony is really very bleak – the girls work long hours at their factory jobs in this remote provincial town. It may open with a young woman singing a rock 'n' roll song on an acoustic guitar, but in this grey, damp-looking corner of communist-era Czechoslovakia there are few hints of the Beatles or the Stones. The women may have jobs, but that doesn't mean they have independence.

As Michael Brooke points out in an introductory essay to the film included with the DVD release, Forman first had the idea for the movie in the late 1950s after meeting a girl carrying a suitcase

late at night in Prague. She had come in search of a man with whom she'd had a one-night stand. Unlike this woman, Andula knows where Milda lives – the problem is that his parents live there too, and he has neglected to tell them anything about her. They quickly quash her romantic notions about eloping or living with him.

In the 1960s, when the Czech film industry was under Soviet control, filmmakers such as Forman and Jiri Menzel deliberately made intimate and comical dramas about everyday characters. Forman proclaimed that he wasn't interested in "grand manner" or "operatic emotion", and that the best stories were rooted in ordinary behaviour. His films were cherished by Czech audiences – Passer claimed that when he and Forman went into exile in the late 1960s they didn't have the proper papers, but the border guard was such a fan of Forman's that he waved them through.

Forman has gone on to make some very distinguished films in the west (most recently 2006's underrated 'Goya's Ghosts'). Nonetheless, films such as 'Ragtime' (1981), 'Amadeus' (1984), 'Valmont' (1989) and even the celebrated 'One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest' (1975) don't have the simplicity or arguably the perceptiveness of 'A Blonde in Love'. Sometimes, in his work in the US, Forman has indulged in "grand manner" and "operatic emotion", and the mischief and playfulness that Passer spotted in him when they were schoolchildren haven't been a hallmark of his Hollywood career. 'A Blonde in Love', like Menzel's 'Closely Observed Trains' (1966), hasn't dated at all, and its humour, finely honed social observation, eroticism and mild subversiveness remain as fresh today as in the mid-1960s.

The Boy with Green Hair

Joseph Losey; US 1948; Odeon Entertainment/Region 2; Certificate U; 82 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1

Film: It's tempting to pigeonhole Joseph Losey's feature debut as a mere children's film (he himself damned some of it as "blatantly sentimental"), but it proves a surprisingly tough little scrapper in practice. Much credit is due to contributors with matching initials: RKO production head Dore Schary, who sanctioned a film with a strongly pacifist and allegorically anti-racist message and gave Losey a hefty budget with which to realise it; and actor Dean Stockwell, who turned 12 during production – there's a pain behind the eyes of his war orphan-turned-follicular anomaly that hints at depths the simplistic message-laden script rarely reaches through its platitudinous dialogue. Robert Ryan is underused as the boy's kindly interlocutor, though plenty of compensation comes from Pat O'Brien as the rollicking Irish vaudevillian who takes him in and who is determined to show him a good life in the face of increasing prejudice from the ignorant. It's almost as though Losey was pre-emptively preparing his defence for the McCarthy hearings in celluloid form – not that it did him any good.

Disc: An excellent transfer from a very clean print makes the most of George Barnes's hyperreal Technicolor cinematography. (MB)

Brighton Rock

John Boulting; UK 1947; Optimum Releasing/Region B Blu-ray/Region 2 DVD; Certificate PG; 92/88 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: John Boulting and Richard Attenborough NFT interview, Rowan Joffe appreciation

Film: Graham Greene's own adaptation (with Terence Rattigan) of his 1938 novel about Brighton's notorious razor gangs was inevitably compromised by censorship but it survived the softening surprisingly well. Much of this is due to Richard Attenborough's still chilling performance as the oddly puritanical teenage gangster Pinkie Brown, though Greene's memorably seedy Brighton is also brilliantly evoked, the original Depression setting enhanced by a sense that it's now very much a post-war tale (for all the claims to the contrary made by the opening titles), the nattily dressed wartime spivs now fully fledged gangsters.

Disc: The print isn't pristine but the detail on the Blu-ray is sharp enough to offer a cornucopia of delights to location-spotters. However, the soundtrack is a disappointment, being fuzzier than the late-1940s vintage would suggest. Extras include an appreciation from Rowan Joffe, director of the recent remake, and a 68-minute audio interview (augmented by stills) taken from a Q&A session at the then relatively new National Film Theatre in 1954, chaired by the BFI's Film Appreciation Officer (and future director) Stanley

Reed in an impeccably civilised fashion that's as engaging for its style as for its content. (MB)

Broadcast News

James L. Brooks; US 1987; Criterion Collection/Region 1; 132 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.85:1; Features: audio commentary featuring James L. Brooks and editor Richard Marks, theatrical trailer, documentary 'James L. Brooks – A Singular Voice', alternate ending and deleted scenes with director's commentary, video interview with CBS news producer Susan Zirinsky, on-set footage featurette, essay booklet, theatrical trailer

Film: Twenty-four years on, this witty, whip-smart rom-com following the fraught TV newsroom love triangle of Holly Hunter's perky producer, Albert Brooks's insecure reporter and William Hurt's charmingly bland anchor-in-training looks like Brooks's masterwork. A warm, humanist comedy about the struggle to reconcile work, love and ethics, it's the kind of character-driven, meticulously performed and emotionally crunchy work that Hollywood has lately rendered almost extinct. Though he made his name with TV sitcoms like *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *Taxi*, Brooks plays with classic cinema tropes here with an exhilarating confidence, as Carrie Rickey's sharp-eyed booklet essay points out. A live broadcast takes on the rhythms of a sex scene, a race against time to edit a news item becomes the chase, the romantic lead doubles as the dumb blonde. Seen from another angle, that of its spiky satire of increasingly dumbed-down network news, it looks not just intelligent and playful but positively prescient. When Albert Brooks's character opines only semi-jokingly that his rival is the devil, who little by little will lower journalistic standards, he's announcing the birth of today's infotainment culture.



Curls on film: 'The Boy with Green Hair'



Drowning by Numbers Greenaway's film embraces quaint English traditions and surreal humour, and casts a warm light over the East Anglian countryside

Discs: This meticulously cleaned-up DVD edition restores the film to its correct ratio. Director Brooks riffs with typical generosity on the audio commentary, though his most engaging insights appear on the improvised alternate ending that's also included. Best of all, there's a hefty, career-spanning documentary that examines his sizeable contribution to American screen comedy. (KS)

The Crowded Day/Song of Paris

John Guillermin; UK 1954/52; BFI Dual Format Edition/Region 2 DVD/Region B Blu-ray; Certificate PG; 83/80 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: booklet, English hard-of-hearing subtitles

Films: Contrasting items from British independent producers Adelphi Films get the BFI dual-format treatment. Of the two, the rather creaking frolic *Song of Paris* is of significantly lesser interest, sending pharmaceuticals magnate Dennis Price back and forth across the Channel for some mild romance with chanteuse Anne Vernon and rather too much mugging from Hollywood character stalwart Mischa Auer's conniving fake aristocrat. Vernon (later seen as Catherine Deneuve's mum in *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*) gets some charming low-key musical numbers but a coasting Price fails to persuade as a romantic foil, and the plot's groanworthy misunderstandings defeat all comers.

The Crowded Day, Guillermin's last film for Adelphi, offers much better evidence of his gift (at least during the pre-1965 British years of his career) for bringing fluidly expressive technique to bear on seemingly workaday genre material. An ensemble drama involving shop girls at an Oxford Street department store may not seem an enticing prospect, yet Talbot

Rothwell's script combines light romantic comedy and engaged social comment (especially sympathetic towards a single sales assistant whose unwanted pregnancy means inevitable redundancy) with a finesse and potency missing from his subsequent *Carry On* assignments. Guillermin nimbly picks his way through the shifts in tone, while a quality cast – from solid leads John Gregson and Joan Rice to Vera Day's pre-Barbara Windsor bubbly blonde, a jaunty early display from Rachel Roberts and bits from assorted national treasures Sid James, Richard Wattis and Dora Bryan – proves impeccable throughout. Beneath the seemingly cosy veneer there's a grown-up drama here about real people and stalled expectations in a country slowly emerging from austerity, and it certainly makes good on Adelphi's ambitions to match the output from Ealing or Rank in quality terms. Absolute catnip for vintage Britfilm aficionados.

Discs: Diligent transfers from obviously well-kept materials, though *Song of Paris* shows just a touch more wear. British B-picture specialist Vic Pratt contributes worthwhile notes, complemented by jolly recollections from the now 85-year-old Guillermin. (TJ)

Films by Peter Greenaway

Drowning by Numbers

UK 1988; Atlantic Film/Region 2; 118 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.66:1

Prospero's Books

UK 1991; Atlantic Film/Region 2; 121 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.77:1

The Baby of Mâcon

UK 1993; Atlantic Film/Region 2; 122 minutes; Aspect Ratio 2.35:1

Films: It's perhaps a sign of his fall from arthouse grace that these three features by Peter Greenaway have not to date been available on UK DVD. These

Scandinavian imports are, therefore, especially valuable (though there is also a German release of *Drowning by Numbers* in the Arthaus Collection of British Cinema, and all three titles appear in an Australian box-set with several other Greenaway films).

Drowning by Numbers is certainly the most audience-friendly of the three, a droll tale of a mother (Joan Plowright) and her two daughters (Juliet Stevenson and Joely Richardson) who exact revenge on their philandering and inadequate husbands, the narrative structured in games and a countdown from 100 to one. In this instance, Greenaway's embrace of quaint English traditions, surreal humour and the warm light he casts over the East Anglian countryside add up to a very pleasurable diversion. It's also one of his best-acted films.

In *Prospero's Books* there is really only one performance, that of Sir John Gielgud as Shakespeare's magus in a very free adaptation of *The Tempest*. Greenaway restructures the drama of transformations and reconciliations into a series of books as created by Prospero, and plays up the masque elements and art-historical references. Following on from the video experimentation of *A TV Dante*, the television series he made in collaboration with artist Tom Phillips in 1989, Greenaway constantly layers and reworks images so that the screen is a shifting maze of visual information. What helps bind this into coherence is Gielgud's eloquent speaking of the verse (he effectively plays all the parts) and an especially inventive and exuberant musical score by Michael Nyman.

Nyman and Greenaway parted ways after *Prospero's Books*, and the later films suffer from the lack of rhythmic impetus and structural unity Nyman's music provided. Notoriously, *The Baby of Mâcon* was a disaster with audiences everywhere, purportedly for its unpalatable violence. The setting is supposedly a large ecclesiastical space in the 17th century, the event a theatrical presentation under the patronage of Cosimo Medici. A newly born boy becomes the subject for adoration and is appropriated by his older sister as her own by virgin birth. Falsely blamed for the death of the bishop's son, she is condemned by the Church to the 'rightful vengeance' of being raped 208 times, but not before she kills the boy. Greenaway is evidently making points – and protested as much at the time – about child exploitation and atrocities committed in the name of religion, but because of the muddled structure (we are apparently witnessing a play within a play, though the lines are forever being redrawn) and lethargic pacing it's a tough film to sit through, even for fans of the director. Amid the cluttered, relentlessly frontal set-ups, 'stars' Julia Ormond and Ralph Fiennes certainly give their all, but they're not helped by some impossible dialogue. **Discs:** Excellent transfers in these Swedish editions, with removable subtitles in all four Scandinavian languages. No extras, however. Also

NEW RELEASES

← available from Atlantic is a Blu-ray edition of *The Baby of Mâcon*, though it should be noted that Sacha Vierny's photography in this instance is on the soft side. (DT)

The Locket

John Brahm; US 1946; Odeon Entertainment/Region 2; Certificate PG; 85 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1

Film: Despite its notoriety for attempting flashbacks within flashbacks within flashbacks, John Brahm's *noir*-tinged romantic melodrama proves surprisingly easy to follow: it simply delves backwards through the troubled life of serial bride and inveterate kleptomaniac Nancy (Laraine Day) to a pivotal childhood event, and forwards again to explore its ramifications on her adult self. The result is pure dollar-book Freud in psychological terms (the locket being the film's Rosebud), but there are pleasures galore in the anatomising of Nancy's various relationships, especially with arrogant but troubled artist Robert Mitchum and psychiatrist Brian Aherne – though the acting honours are comprehensively stolen by Lillian Fontaine (mother of Joan, and Olivia de Havilland) as the unconscionably cruel Lady Wyndham. Her 'traditional' views on child-rearing would be

decisively debunked by Benjamin Spock's *Baby and Child Care* – published, coincidentally, in the same year that the film came out, though the events are not thought to be connected.

Disc: Picture and sound are more than acceptable, especially given the budget price. (MB)

The Magician

Rex Ingram; US 1926; Warner Archive/Region 1; 79 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1

Film: Director Rex Ingram, probably best known today for his 1921 version of *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* with Rudolph Valentino, was celebrated for his dramatic flair and visual flamboyance. He and his wife and star Alice Terry moved from Hollywood to the South of France and worked with an international cast on the WWI drama *Mare Nostrum*. It was then that Ingram and his set designer Harry Lachman served as mentors to the young Michael Powell, who recorded his experiences working as an assistant on their next film, *The Magician*, in his autobiography, *A Life in Movies* (he even appears briefly in the film in a comic cameo).

Based on the W. Somerset Maugham novel, the story tells of a young sculptress whose back is seriously injured when her giant artwork falls on her, and how she is saved by an American surgeon.



Roeg male: David Bowie in 'The Man Who Fell to Earth'

Their budding romance is stymied by the presence of Oliver Haddo, a hypnotist and magician who becomes obsessed with the sculptress and with the idea that "the heart blood of a maiden" is the key to creating human life. As Powell commented, Ingram took "a tall tale and made it taller", and miscast Paul Wegener (the imposing German actor who directed and acted in 1920's *The Golem*) as the magician when perhaps he should have asked the man on whom the book was based, the infamous occultist Aleister Crowley.

The film is now chiefly memorable for two sequences, a fantasy orgy (which according to Powell was mainly the work of Lachman) and the final confrontation in a tower during a thunderstorm, clearly an inspiration for James Whale's *Frankenstein* films. **Disc:** A no-fuss transfer without extras. The print is imperfect but clear and sharp, and the film is enhanced by a new score by Robert Israel that plunders the 19th-century orchestral repertoire. (DT)

The Man Who Fell to Earth

Nicolas Roeg; UK 1976; Optimum/Region B Blu-ray; Certificate 18; 138 minutes; Aspect Ratio 2.35:1; Features: documentary 'Watching the Alien', interviews, trailer

Film: "You've got nine basic patents here," says Rip Torn's astonished lawyer on being presented with plans for rapid wealth creation by the mysterious Thomas Jerome Newton (David Bowie). There were times when it seemed as though Nicolas Roeg was just as keen to patent new forms of cinema, with the result that a film that should by rights be firmly anchored in the post-glam pre-punk mid-1970s surprises even on the umpteenth viewing as it fissures into unexpected forms in parallel with its alien protagonist's own shape-shifting. Genuinely cerebral big-screen sci-fi is a vanishingly rare proposition in British film history, but this would stand out in a much more crowded field.

Disc: Some alarmingly grainy credits-backing footage thankfully gives way to a superlatively sharp and detailed picture, presumably from the same source as Criterion's much

praised Region A Blu-ray. Extras seem deceptively skimpy until one discovers that individual interviews with Roeg, screenwriter Paul Mayersberg, cinematographer Tony Richmond and co-star Candy Clark average nearly half an hour apiece (there's also an archive interview with novelist Walter Tevis). The 25-minute *Watching the Alien* is familiar from earlier DVD releases but covers most bases. Bowie is the most glaring absentee, but that seems oddly appropriate. (MB)

One Continuous Take: The Kay Mander Film Book

Kay Mander et al/Adele Carroll; UK 1940-48/2001; Panamint/Region 0 Pal; 251 minutes total; Aspect Ratio 1.78:1/1.33:1; Features: documentary, booklet

Films/Discs: British director Kay Mander first entered the pre-war film industry as a continuity assistant. From the 1950s she was an in-demand continuity 'girl' for directors including Huston, Mann and Truffaut, but between these two periods she was herself a director, as part of the documentary movement during WWII and through the late 1940s.

This two-disc anthology collects eight documentaries Mander worked on during that period, preceded by a biographical film made by Adele Carroll in 2001. It's interesting that a potential 'extra' hence becomes the opening item and overarching narrative, meaningfully binding the shorts that follow. Carroll's documentary is a gentle, informative portrait and career history centred on Mander's engaging recollections.

The first disc collects five utilitarian Shell wartime productions, all good stuff though not much more (or less) interesting than others of their type. More distinctive are the social documentaries on the second disc, made at various production companies. *Homes for the People*, sponsored by the *Daily Herald* for the 1945 Attlee election campaign, stands out by marrying the direct-testimony technique of *Housing Problems* (1935) to fluent, inventive graphics and a more outspoken message. Even better are the lucid scientific filmmaking of *Penicillin*

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(1944), the beguiling atmosphere of *Highland Doctor* (1943) and the interesting mix of professional and amateur performance in that film and *A Plan to Work On* (1948).

The release of this set begs the question of whether Mander deserves the 'auteur' status it bestows on her. Few members of the British documentary school have yet been singled out for individual valorisation by DVD release – should Mander be so near the front of the queue? Talented, sometimes inventive, unfairly overlooked: such may be said of many of Mander's generation. Which isn't to criticise the release; one of DVD's continuing merits is that, by curating archival shorts, it prompts debate of kinds that online streaming lends itself to less easily.

Panamint is among a handful of cottage-industry labels labouring to increase the availability of archival British documentary. It's good at reaching nostalgic or specialist audiences, which partly explains why it's had less attention from cineastes. From its catalogue, John Eldridge's one-of-a-kind Edinburgh city symphony *Waverley Steps* (1948), the same director's patchier but intriguing Dylan Thomas collaboration *Our Country* (1944) and Hilary Harris's superb Oscar-winning *Seawards the Great Ships* (1960) can all confidently be recommended to movie buffs whose tastes extend beyond feature films. Panamint also provides impressively extensive coverage of Scottish filmmaking in particular. However, by making filmmaking itself (more than its subject-matter) its binding theme, *One Continuous Take* marks something of a departure for the label. One hopes that Ms Mander, now 96, got a real kick out of its release. (PR)

Riot

Buzz Kulik; US 1969; Olive Films/Region 1 NTSC; 96 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.85:1

Film: Produced by William Castle as, undoubtedly, an effort to capitalise after a fashion on Roger Corman's women's prison exploitationers and *Cool Hand Luke* in the same stroke, this cheap, gritty potboiler exhibits the residual influence of experimental theatre and one-camera TV dramas (director Buzz Kulik was a veteran TV toiler) but remains resolutely devoted to drive-in pulp and, most importantly, the let's-do-it-for-real aesthetic of the 1960s. Just as *Easy Rider*'s cast and crew road-tripped and used what they found, Castle and Kulik decided (in the same year) to make a prison-break movie using mostly real convicts and guards, on their own turf (namely, the Arizona State Prison). Jim Brown is "the man" the croony R&B title song warbles about, a surly con who just wants to do straight time in an old-school, sun-blasted institution prone to corporeal punishment and confinement, but a full-scale uprising, led by megalomaniac Gene Hackman, scotches his plans, sucking the even-tempered, strong-willed hulk into a leadership role he doesn't want. The arc of the story doesn't move quickly but there's an interesting

Being human

William Ivory hails the great Jack Rosenthal, who took ordinary life and turned it into breathtaking television

Jack Rosenthal at the BBC

The Evacuees/Bar Mitzvah Boy/Spend Spend Spend/Eskimo Day/Cold Enough for Snow

Alan Parker/Michael Tuchner/
John Goldschmidt/Piers Haggard/
Piers Haggard; UK 1975/76/77/96/97;
Acorn Media/Region 2; Certificate 15;
408 minutes total; Aspect Ratio 4:3

There are moments in these five screenplays that will take your breath away. Literally. In each one. And they will do so because they will come at you when you least expect it, when you think you are secure and know the territory in which you find yourself. That's the point; Jack Rosenthal has immersed you in the everyday, the ordinary, the familiar, precisely so that he can fire an arrow of pure, piercing, bittersweet truth through the centre of his drama, and hit you squarely in the heart and stop you dead in your tracks. And in recognising that suddenly revealed and unexpected truth (so often a painful, hard-gotten but invariably sympathetic demonstration of the frailty of human nature) we find ourselves reassessing the oh-so familiar patterns and places of our own lives. We look again at the way we exist and what we take for granted and perhaps what we even consider to be mundane, and view it in a new and transforming light so that the little becomes large and the slight becomes profound, and we place ourselves at the heart of our own daily dramas and consider the moments that might cause others to catch their breath.

With Dennis Potter and Alan Plater, Rosenthal put British television on the map and paved the way for later luminaries like Alan Bleasdale. But Rosenthal is the best. And he is the best because he is the kindest. After all, it is much harder to be a profound and startling writer while buying into life. But that was Rosenthal's way. He recorded flesh and blood at its most basic and common level and then gloried in it... He wrote what it was to breathe air and eat food and fall in love and have spats and make up and feel protective and be jealous and fall in love. Always, love... at the centre of all he produced. Love of life, love of family, love of one's life.

In *'The Evacuees'* (1975), a Jewish boy and his brother leave their home in Manchester for safety in Blackpool only to discover prejudice and cruelty there in the shape of their new adopted 'mother'. But,



On the money: 'Spend Spend Spend' (above) by Jack Rosenthal (pictured below)

of course, in one of those utterly extraordinary 'breathtaking' Rosenthal moments, it's revealed that the harried in the evacuee house is fighting her own war and is as much a victim of painful dislocation as the children.

In *'Bar Mitzvah Boy'* (1976) it is family love again, but this time fractured through doubt. And the doubt finds voice in learning, learning through religion – and finally that becomes the sound of a squeaking roundabout in a kids' playground, a motif for the whole film where all that is profound and metaphysical is rendered in simple and eloquent images of solid life; life lived. Thus a husband and wife lie in an unremarkable bed, in a typical house, on the eve of their son becoming a man, she with her hair in curlers, obsessed with the niceties of the reception, he pyjamaed and full of bluster, describing the irreverent speech he will deliver the following day and appalling his wife as he does

so. Then – in, what, ten or 12 lines?

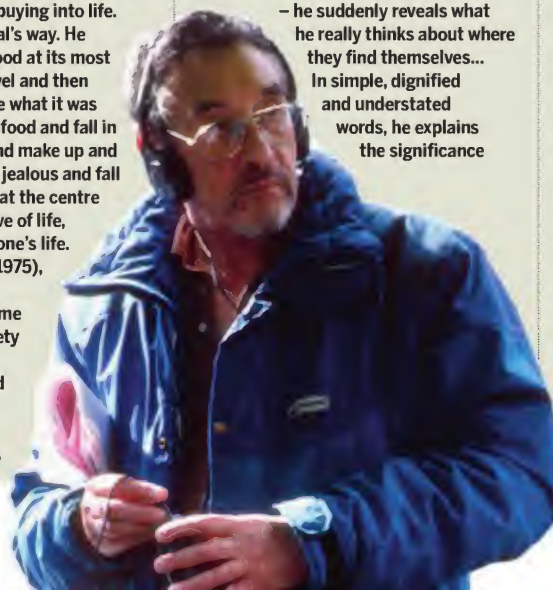
– he suddenly reveals what he really thinks about where they find themselves... In simple, dignified and understated words, he explains the significance

of this commonplace to him. The wife looks across at him and smiles. And we weep... Stunning.

All these films are brilliant, of course. But if there has been a better 75 minutes on British TV, ever, than *'Spend Spend Spend'* (1977) I'd be pleased to see it. For here, Rosenthal renders greed, cruelty, fecklessness, betrayal and selfishness in such an astonishing and empathetic way that what might have been a sorry and tawdry tale of failure and dissolution becomes instead the most thrilling and compelling portrait of survival and love and guts that one is ever likely to witness. Indeed, by the end of the film one is left feeling nothing but admiration for the ruined central character.

Similarly, in *'Eskimo Day'* (1996) and *'Cold Enough for Snow'* (1997), Rosenthal again manages to deliver human frailty in such a forgiving guise that rather than criticise those characters who display it, we feel for them. In this case, it is a pair of parents on whom we focus as their two teenage children prepare for and finally attend university, and in the process leave their homes. These two films make up an exquisite study in what Rosenthal does best, since, in the rueful support of the ever less needed parents and the sheer, unadulterated and unconscious lust for freedom demonstrated by their children, we feel we are in a comfortingly proverbial place, until, across the course of one walk beneath the arches of a Cambridge college, we are suddenly comfortable no more, and find ourselves instead in a swirling, unsettling suburban dystopia. All in a moment. In a few steps. But this was Rosenthal's genius – to flick a switch on the workaday and throw it into stark and brilliant relief.

William Ivory is a screenwriter and actor. His most recent film was *'Made in Dagenham'*



Newman's own

A cautionary tale about the power of the media, 'WUSA' is a movie that gets under your skin, writes **Tim Lucas**

WUSA

Stuart Rosenberg; US 1970;
Olive Films/Region 1; 115 minutes;
Aspect Ratio 2.35:1

Paul Newman starred in 60 films over the course of his 52-year screen career but solely produced only five, all of them vehicles for his wife Joanne Woodward. Of those five, he appeared in just two, and only this one afforded them equal prominence. Based on 'A Hall of Mirrors', the award-winning 1967 first novel by Robert Stone (whose later 'Dog Soldiers' became Karel Reisz's 'Who'll Stop the Rain'), 'WUSA' is an uneven but fascinating time-capsule situated roughly in the vicinity of pictures like 'A Face in the Crowd' (1957), 'The Manchurian Candidate' (1962), 'Medium Cool' (1969) and 'Network' (1976), which prophesied the psychotic power of media in once-fantastical terms that have now, almost surreally, come to pass.

Directed by Stuart Rosenberg (one can almost hear Newman instructing him: "Do for Joanne what you did for me with 'Cool Hand Luke'"), the film successfully navigates the rocky waters of transition that too often characterise this period of production, when commercial cinema was scrambling to assimilate its new freedoms and the tastes of the now controlling youth market. Both Newman and Woodward were in their forties, older than the Beat characters Stone had originally envisioned, and the story was modernised from the novel's 1962 timeframe, but neither adjustment feels out of place; Stone wrote the screenplay himself and was able to retain his work's integrity – not the novel itself, but a respectable analogue. The result is one of those rare films, like Monte Hellman's 'Two Lane Blacktop' (1971), whose profundity seems to bypass ready comprehension, instead diving under the skin and rumbling there for hours or days like an idling motor.

The point of the film is that anyone who lives in service to an ideal may be innocently – or cynically – aiding and abetting forces whose goals may oppose their own. Newman plays Reinhardt, a much fired alcoholic radio announcer who drifts into New Orleans looking for work. After bumming \$30 from Farley (Laurence Harvey), an old British compadre now posing as a Southern preacher in a derelict mission, he meets Geraldine (Woodward), a scar-faced but still beautiful bar-hopper, not quite a hooker but sweet-talking steak dinners out of drunken sailors on leave. He buys her a meal and follows her to the rooming house she shares with polio-stricken



Listen with prejudice: Joanne Woodward and Paul Newman in 'WUSA'

Philomene (Cloris Leachman), who hobbles around town on crutches selling lottery chances. The next day, Reinhardt auditions for WUSA, 'the Voice of the American's America', a local-going-national radio station which (like David Cronenberg's 'Videodrome') has a philosophy – and its board of directors find Reinhardt's rugged, blue-eyed face just the right mask for their bill of goods. In addition to playing records, it becomes Reinhardt's job to read a daily editorial intended to inculcate WUSA's listeners with the extreme rightwing hate ethic of its founder Bingamon (Pat Hingle). Reinhardt has no problem with that; he does as he's told while knocking back another belt from his companion thermos, too insulated by drink and loss to appreciate that he's finally found something real to believe in – Geraldine – until it's too late. That point of crisis comes courtesy of another tenant in the same complex, Rainey (Anthony Perkins), who is awakening to the fact that his earnest work as a welfare department surveyor, undertaken with the goal of helping poor black families, is supplying information to politicians whose goal is to unhouse them.

Reinhardt and Rainey: two men with similar names, both working for opposing teams yet serving the same faceless master. As one character (Paul Hampton, the subsequent star of Cronenberg's 'Shivers') observes, "There ain't no such thing as a good guy and a bad guy; we're all in this together." These parallel storylines come to a head at a political rally hosted by WUSA, with a symbolic (and symbolically rigged) entertainment

The film's message has only become more relevant now that impartial US news reporting is a thing of the past

shootout between two rhinestone cowboys dressed in white and black, where the decisive shot is fired from the cheap seats in a sly nod to Laurence Harvey's presence in the proceedings.

Originally written as a caution against the polarising forces of early 1960s agitprop broadcasters such as Joe Pyne, the story was filmed at the height of young America's disillusion with government – and its message has only become more relevant now that impartial US news reporting is a relic of the past. It sounds like the men's story, but there is a baroque, Tennessee Williams quality to the characters, so that, as in Williams, the men always feel observed through the more seasoned eyes of the women. Woodward, never sexier on screen, consistently earns her pride of place in the mise en scène as someone caught between deadly gears innocently put into motion by the men in her life. Perkins gives an inspired, superbly modulated performance, and Newman, perfectly at ease in Reinhardt's skin, looks a bit cut back in the editing, as if in producerly deference to his co-stars. Imbued with the volatility of its times, the film's only weakness is a trite, folksy music soundtrack which hasn't stood the test of time, with the message of Neil Diamond's well-meaning 'Glory Road' now dwarfed by the memory of his later hit 'America', the sort of flag-waving, patriot-milking schmaltz that WUSA would have in steady rotation were it a real station.

Olive Films' no-frills presentation is a welcome reminder of a picture whose subtlety and complexity were at odds with a time that demanded we all choose sides, but it is hardly definitive. The scope lensing of Richard Moore, who cut his teeth on AIP fare like 'The Wild Angels', is handsomely preserved but the audio balance is a mess, with sound effects overwhelming dialogue, and dialogue levels demanding volume settings that make the music punishingly loud. This is a job worth doing right.

➤ tension between Hackman's real scheme – hold hostages and make demands as if in protest, while digging a tunnel out past the wall – and his succumbing to the lure of power and political bargaining. True to its decade, the revolt never seems like it has even half a chance of success, lending the proceedings a Beckettian rhythm.

The film's texture is rough and uneven – unsurprisingly, since only seven of the actors were professionals, and hundreds of real inmates and prison personnel essentially played themselves, including Arizona State Warden Frank A. Eymann as himself. The often clumsy acting, then, has an unavoidable veracity to it; these are real men, enacting their own daydream of rebellion and escape, and the prison locale itself is virtually a character all its own. In his scene-chewing prime, Hackman naturally steals the film with his pugnacious energy, while Brown, no better at emoting than the unschooled felons that surround him, is used mostly for his iconic force as a Black Man facing up to the system, and in visual terms, shot muscly and looming against a stark blue sky, he's virtually axiomatic.

Disc: The print is fresh and the transfer is fierce and bright, though unsupported by extras. It's a shame – there are surely wicked on-location production stories that remain untold. (MA)

Senso

Luchino Visconti; Italy 1954; Criterion/Region 1 NTSC; 123 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: new making-of documentary, 1966 BBC portrait of Visconti, new film about Visconti, documentary on 'Senso' and opera, visual essay by Peter Cowie, essay by Mark Rappaport, 'The Wanton Countess'

Film: Always conflicted between his own aristocratic wealth and his devotion to Marx, Visconti has had an uneasy time finding a secure place in the canon, at least outside Italy; his high-literature pretensions and opulence porn were seductive to many but alienating to others, and even today belying up to *Ludwig* (1972), *The Damned* (1969) or *Rocco and His Brothers* (1960) is a task fraught with compromises.

Not so with his one unarguable masterpiece, *Senso*, his fourth feature and the bridge between his neorealist origins and the ambitious monsters he generated in the 1960s and 1970s. Based on a little-read 19th-century novella by Camillo Boito, the story is set in 1866, during the *Risorgimento*, and tracks the downfall of Alida Valli's Venetian countess as she gradually abandons her marriage, her aristocratic standing and even her faith in the revolution, all for the sake of a headlong, frankly sexual romance with an amoral Austrian officer (Farley Granger). The hair-yanking propulsion of the story (scripted by Suso Cecchi d'Amico) may have been exactly what Visconti needed most, but there's also no denying the film's often breathtaking visual attack, with its on-location Venice clutter, opera-house *mise en scène* (the opening shot is a 270-degree spectacle), vast

bloodied battlefields and interiors that are meticulously detailed and yet shot as if they were *trompe l'oeil*, operatic backdrops that come eerily to life.

In fact, compositions and textures from neoclassical painting (particularly Fattori and the rest of the Macchiaioli) fill Visconti's frames but never just scenically – the melodrama works its way through the architecture, breaking palaces into telescoped passages of doorways and windows, and cities into vast mazes through which Valli's self-destructing lover stalks in moneyed gowns and symbolic veils, creeping along the walls like a hunted rodent. The movie's climactic heart, in fact, is a 13-minute triangulated face-off in a single room, as Granger's poisonous lout confesses his treasonous venery after his desperate 'patron' has left her life behind and found him with a golden prostitute (Marcella Marianni). Reverbering with Tolstoy, Flaubert and James, the tale is classically overheated, with Valli, in a career performance, screaming as if burned at the stake.

Discs: The highlights of Criterion's characteristically state-of-the-art package include Peter Cowie's erudite analysis of the film's visual motifs, and *The Wanton Countess*, the slightly shorter English version of the film which not only sports Granger and Valli's actual voices and dialogue written by Paul Bowles and Tennessee Williams, but also demonstrates, with its murkier images, the beauty of the restoration on the original, executed by the Cineteca do Bologna and the Film Foundation. (MA)

The Social Network

David Fincher; US 2010; Sony Pictures Entertainment/Region-free Blu-ray; Certificate 12; 120/115 minutes (Blu-ray/DVD); Aspect Ratio 2.35:1 anamorphic; Features: commentaries, featurettes, documentary, multi-angle Ruby Skye VIP Room; multi-soundtrack Trent Reznor 'In the Hall of the Mountain King' arrangement

Film: Already canonised as this magazine's best film of 2010, David Fincher's 'Facebook film' proves just as compelling on the small screen, especially in the Blu-ray version. But what's most intriguing in retrospect is the way the copious disc extras show how Fincher achieved the impression of old-fashioned Hollywood craft by means of the most sophisticated technology at his disposal. For instance, the apparently seamless opening scene, with its rapid-fire ping-pong dialogue, was built up from 99 takes and then audio edited to syllable-length precision – not because the actors weren't up to their jobs, but simply because it was possible to fine-tune the material to that degree. Details like this can be more captivating than the more generic special-effects explanations (though those in search of the secret of how the Winklevoss twins were seamlessly created from one actor won't be disappointed either), because they illustrate the kind of perfectionism that parallels Mark Zuckerberg's own obsessive coding and recoding of the algorithms underpinning Facebook.



The Social Network The opening scene, with its rapid-fire ping-pong dialogue, was built up from 99 takes and audio edited to syllable-length precision

Which suggests that he would at least approve the methods, if not necessarily the message.

Discs: The film was shot and edited digitally to begin with, so picture and sound are effectively flawless. (MB)

Szamanka

Andrzej Zulawski; Poland 1996; Mondo Vision/Region 0 NTSC; 117 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.66:1; Features: audio commentary by Daniel Bird and David A. Mackenzie, video interviews with Zulawski and Manuela Gretkowska, booklet

Film: Zulawski's return to Poland in the early 1990s after his exile in France resulted in a film that caused considerable controversy on its home turf but was little seen elsewhere. The multilayered drama (an original screenplay commissioned from novelist Manuela Gretkowska) deals with an anthropology professor's twin obsessions – for the recently discovered intact body of a 3,000-year-old shaman, and for a young female student simply known as 'the Italian'. The human relationship takes place largely in a sparsely furnished apartment (prompting some Polish critics to dub the film 'Last Tango in Warsaw'), her wild, otherworldly state and the intensity of their sex ("I am because I am in you" becomes his credo) linked with the shaman who was evidently also overtaken by a woman (*Szamanka* is translated here as 'She-Shaman').

As if the subject weren't heated enough, the film provoked particular outrage for its anti-Catholic stance, with the frequent framing of the woman against omnipresent images of the Madonna and a suicidal gay priest being intrinsic to the story. Warsaw is shown to be a graffiti-dominated, strip-neon-lit and garishly coloured city (it's been cleaned up since), its academia split between a nepotistic faculty and

impoverished students. Such an extreme, feverish viewpoint will not surprise fans of Zulawski's *Possession* (1981), which *Szamanka* in some ways resembles, not least in its 'what if' apocalyptic ending. As usual, the fluid camerawork (much of it using Steadicam, though with discretion) is at one with the uninhibited performances: the professor is well played by popular Polish macho-man Boguslaw Linda, but the revelation is 18-year-old Iwona Petry, a student with no previous acting experience whom Zulawski discovered by chance in a café. Her loose-limbed physicality and haunting face provide for an intense one-off, in every sense. **Disc:** This transfer – the fourth in Mondo Vision's lovingly packaged series of Zulawski's films – is once again outstanding and far superior to anything yet offered. There is also again a luxury, limited 'Premium Signature'

Hair-raising: 'Trouble in Mind'



edition, which includes a CD of the soundtrack music. Zulawski explains in his interview that because the film is "without masks" (no political metaphors necessary, no layers of genre), he has declined to record a commentary track; in its place is not so much an analysis of the film but more a discursive chat in which Daniel Bird paints a highly critical picture of the current Polish film industry. (DT)

Trouble in Mind

Alan Rudolph; US 1985; Shout! Factory/Region 1 NTSC; 108 minutes; Aspect Ratio 16:9; Features: new making-of featurette, interviews, new essay by Rudolph

Film: One of the oddest and most stubbornly idiosyncratic American filmmakers to peak in the 1980s, Alan Rudolph in his purest form was a hyper-romantic, and this lovely, feather-headed neo-noir hybrid freak is so drenched in redigested movie sentimentality that it often seems to be all happening in a dream. Which was clearly Rudolph's purpose; he defines the film in the new liner notes as something "intentionally made from old movie parts", a reflex as common as Godard imitators and heirs but which also allows a filmmaker's distinctive obsessions to run amok.

Here, Rudolph has contrived a pseudo-sci-fi retro-futurism on a shoestring budget, a rainy noir city simultaneously occupying a trenchcoat-and-fedora past, a nebulous dystopian future and a bad-post-punk-haircut present (guess which of these strands ages the worst – nostalgia is a fickle mistress). Kris Kristofferson is the tough ex-cop just out of stir for a crime of honour, Keith Carradine the naive yokel coming to Rain City and falling into a life of crime, Lori Singer his innocent mate, and Genevieve Bujold the snapdragon femme running the city's only all-night diner; their paths cross and recross, and unlikely desperate romance tries to take root in the mythified sin-city soil.

Trouble in Mind is rightly remembered mostly for its cohesive style, a misty, grainy ur-matinee urban vibe filthy with neon and steam, scored by Mark Isham's mournful trumpet and Marianne Faithfull's cigarette rasp, and employing the architecture of Seattle to suggest a decaying future just as Godard used the ugliest parts of Paris in *Alphaville*. (Cutaways to establishing shots using Kristofferson's tabletop toy-model metropolis are beguiling, as they are in Alex Cox's *Repo Chick* and

Thomas the Tank Engine, two other retro-dizzy dystopias.) Certainly the moody ambience of the film overshadows the characters, who are soulful clichés revelling in their clichéness. Indeed, Rudolph, when he is working in his signature mode, is necessarily an acquired taste and, as much as he succeeds in coalescing a singular vision, one may well grow impatient with the brooding and the soft thinking, which among other

NEW RELEASES

things insist that Carradine's transformation from rube into hood be expressed via eye shadow and Flock of Seagulls hairdos. The dependence on Singer's dewy but vacant beauty and Kristofferson's weary machismo also delivers diminishing returns in a conventional way, but style-smitten fans of the film have and will buy it all wholesale, as is proper with a movie that so conscientiously creates its own terrarium universe.

Disc: This restored edition offers up a feast of runaway grain; it's a very fuzzy movie, dense with obfuscatory smoke, fog, underlighting and grit. (MA)

The Valley (Obscured by Clouds)

Barbet Schroeder; France 1972; BFI Dual Format Edition/Region 2 DVD/Region B Blu-Ray; Certificate 15; 105 minutes; Aspect Ratio 2.35:1; Features: three documentary shorts by Schroeder, booklet with director interview, theatrical trailers for 'The Valley', 'More' and 'Maitresse'

Film: Like the uncharted Papua New Guinea valley its Dionysian heroes seek, Schroeder's ethnographic road-movie, little seen recently, has assumed mythic qualities. On close inspection it's a coolly contemplative piece which turns the director's characteristically detached eye on the counterculture search for Paradise, rather than the dippy, trippy outing of cinephile legend. As Bulle Ogier's chic, rapaciously acquisitive bourgeoisie joins a hippie band bound for the fabled valley, the film observes their mind-altering and free-love rituals with the same close, neutral attention it lavishes on the ceremonies of the Mapuga tribe. It musters a healthy scepticism about its protagonists, however, adroitly exposing their naive enchantment with 'primitive' cultures and the quest that disguises alienation as liberation. The Bressonian performance-free performances demanded of the cast are intriguing or distancing, depending on your taste, and the hippie philosophising has staled somewhat. But Ogier's hallucinogen-fuelled trysts with trees, snakes and mud men, alongside the unhurried, curiously absorbing sequences of tribal life, make for a heady mix.

Disc: Schroeder insists in his booklet interview: "Since it's not a dramatic film, it is essential to be able to feel the sensuality of the images." Fortunately, this new HD transfer buffs Néstor Almendros's luscious sylvan landscapes to a seductively high shine. Pink Floyd's menacing, atmospheric synth soundtrack is also well served, though there's less of it than you'd expect. The booklet essays are thoughtful and detailed. (KS)

This month's DVD releases reviewed by Sergio Angelini, Michael Atkinson, Michael Brooke, Trevor Johnston, Kate Stables, Patrick Russell and David Thompson

Reviews in Monthly Film Bulletin and Sight & Sound are cited in parentheses

TELEVISION

Justified – Season 1

Rooney McP/Timberman-Beverly Productions/Nemo Films/FX; US 2010; Sony Home Entertainment/Region 2; Certificate 15; 565 minutes; Aspect Ratio 16:9; Features: 'What Would Elmore Do?' featurette, interviews

Programme: Elmore Leonard, having already published several westerns, made the transition to the crime genre and the popular series of contemporary Detroit- and Florida-based thrillers on which his reputation rests via *The Moonshine War*, his book and screenplay set in Prohibition-era Kentucky. *Justified* is steeped in Leonard-lore and is something of a throwback – a deliberately anachronistic hybrid, charting the modern-day adventures of Leonard's Stetson-wearing US marshal Raylan Givens, who is packed off back home to Kentucky as punishment after gunning down a Miami gangster.

The show starts well with a faithful adaptation of Leonard's novella 'Fire in the Hole' but then stumbles a little, initially falling into a highly repetitive pattern. In barely half a dozen episodes there are several sieges, jokes are made about how often Raylan's girlfriend gets kidnapped, and one story is based purely around whether our hero will actually manage not to kill anyone this week. More damaging though is the narrative strategy in which a seemingly softboiled would-be felon suddenly turns round and shoots a confederate apparently without provocation; the surprise element really does wear off after seven episodes in a row. On the other hand, the source novella is expanded with considerable skill and imagination, without diluting the characteristic tang of Leonard's laconic humour ("Miami is a sunny place for shady people"). In addition, Walton Goggins as Raylan's specular nemesis, a white supremacist with a penchant for rocket launchers who becomes a vigilante with messianic delusions, is fabulously entertaining. There's also some outrageous violence, including wine-inducing DIY dentistry, before the narrative deftly comes full circle to conclude with a good old-fashioned shootout.

Discs: The image transfer is spotless while the 5.1 audio is wonderfully rich and spacious. The half hour of extras include fulsome tributes to Leonard from the show's writers. (SA)

Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em – The Complete Series

BBC; UK 1973-78; 2 entertain/Region 2; 730 minutes; Certificate PG; Aspect Ratio 4:3

Programme: What can one say about Frank Spencer, the creation of writer Raymond Allen and actor Michael Crawford? That he loved his wife Betty? That he sang to his little daughter Jessica? That he was accident-prone to a suspicious degree? Were his disasters a cry



Justified The source novella is expanded with considerable skill, without diluting the tang of Elmore Leonard's laconic humour

for help? Although highly popular in the 1970s, viewed at a remove of nearly 40 years this very dated series brings into sharp relief the fact that more or less the same period separates the original filming from the glory days of the slapstick comedies the show lovingly tips its beret to.

While the daredevil stunts inevitably recall Harold Lloyd, the inherent sadness in Crawford's curiously effeminate man-child is also meant to evoke the pathos of Chaplin and Langdon. Another important influence can be discerned in an early episode set in a house equipped with every modern gadget (Frank predictably spends most of the time stuck in the lavatory), which is plainly a homage to Keaton's 1922 classic *The Electric House*. Despite such fine comic aspirations it is probably nearer the mark to suggest that what the show really manages to approximate most successfully is the particular combination of sentimentality and pratfalls associated with Norman Wisdom.

If much of the comedy seems bogged down in old-fashioned stereotypes, there is on occasions a surprisingly adult piquancy. One story in particular contrasts Frank's sense of inadequacy, both social and sexual (Betty suggests he see a specialist), with flashbacks to his courting days in which we see humiliation and cruelty in his upbringing. The series is remembered mainly today for its elaborate stunt set pieces, but Crawford's impressive physicality and coordination are just as good in the smaller studio-bound sequences – indeed, episodes tend to work best

when viewed, with all their clichés, *in toto*, and so able to build up a fair head of cumulative steam.

Discs: The transfers are clean, bright and consistently free of age-related debris. (SA)

The War You Don't See

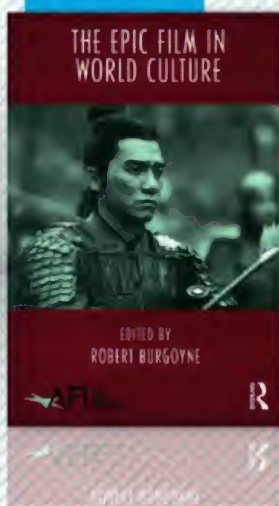
ITV; UK 2010; Network DVD/Region 2; 164 minutes total; Certificate E; Aspect Ratio 16:9; Features: Julian Assange interview

Programme: It was the nightly coverage on American network television of the carnage in Vietnam that helped to end that conflict – and the importance of the media as a central tool in modern warfare has been indisputable ever since. In the recent flare-up in Egypt it came as no surprise that the internet was the first thing to go once state reprisals began.

This, the latest salvo from John Pilger against the cupidity of governments in the pocket of big business, focuses on the recent phenomenon of 'embedding' journalists in war zones such as Iraq in order to control the output of the 'free' press. Highlights include Rageh Omar admitting just how quickly he fell in line with the government propaganda machine when reporting the fall of Saddam Hussein for the BBC. Pilger's deadpan intelligence and indefatigable probing of state-sanctioned violence, censorship and control of the media have hardly ever been more urgent or topical.

Disc: The sole extra is particularly timely: an hour-long version of Pilger's thought-provoking one-on-one with WikiLeaks' Julian Assange. (SA)

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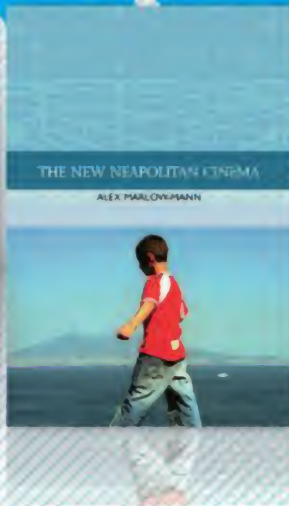


The Epic Film in World Culture

Edited by Robert Burgoyne, Routledge, 396p, illustrated, hardback, £80, ISBN 9780415990172; paperback, £21.99, ISBN 9780415990189

With the recent release of spectacular blockbuster films from *Gladiator* to *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, the epic has once again become a major form in contemporary cinema. This new book explores the rebirth of the epic film in a period marked by heightened and conflicting appeals to national, ethnic and religious belonging. The original essays in this volume explore the tension between the evolving global context of film production and reception and the particular provenance of the epic as an expression of national mythology and aspiration, challenging our understanding of epics past and present.

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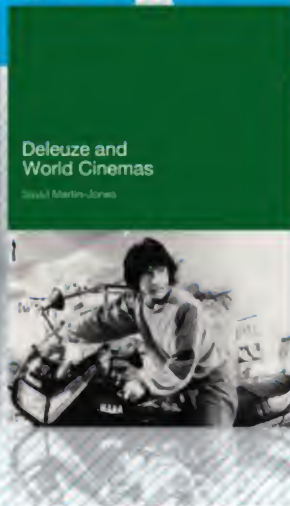


The New Neapolitan Cinema

By Alex Marlow-Mann, Edinburgh University Press, 256pp, illustrated, hardback, £65, ISBN 9780748640669

Vito and the Others, *Death of a Neapolitan Mathematician* and *Libera* – the debuts of three young Neapolitan filmmakers – stood out dramatically in the landscape of 1990s Italian cinema, and over the next decade and a half Naples became a thriving centre for film production. In this first study of one of the most vital currents in contemporary European cinema, Alex Marlow-Mann provides a detailed and provocative study of this distinct regional tradition. Tracing its relationship with the popular musical melodramas previously produced in Naples, he reveals how contemporary filmmakers have challenged traditional filmmaking practices.

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Deleuze and World Cinemas

By David Martin-Jones, Continuum, 288pp, hardback, £65, ISBN 9780826416933; paperback, £19.99, ISBN 9780826436429

Although Deleuze's books offer radical new ways of understanding cinema, his conclusions often seem Eurocentric. *Deleuze and World Cinemas* explores what happens when his ideas come into contact with the films he did not discuss: those from Europe and the US (from Georges Méliès to Michael Mann) and a range of world cinemas, including Bollywood blockbusters, Hong Kong action movies, Argentine melodramas and South Korean sci-fi. These encounters demonstrate the need for constant adaptation and reinterpretation of Deleuze's findings if they are to remain relevant, especially with regard to cinema's engagement with the aftermath of the Cold War and the global dominance of neoliberal globalisation.

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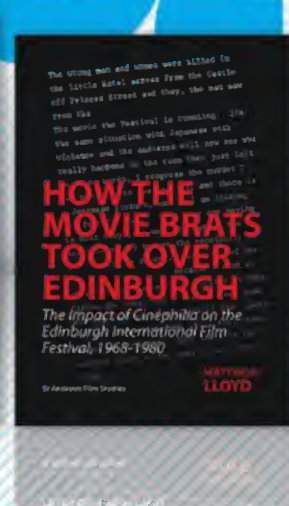


Film Festival Yearbook 3: Film Festivals and East Asia

Edited by Dina Iordanova and Ruby Cheung, St Andrews Film Studies, 292pp, illustrated, paperback, £19.99, ISBN 9780956373038

The most exciting developments in world cinema over the past two decades have been linked to East Asian countries, and film festivals in the region have become increasingly important to global film trade. The third volume in the *Film Festival Yearbook* series turns its attention to this rapidly expanding but little-studied terrain. Through a series of contextual essays, seven case studies and a resources section comprising interviews with festival insiders, maps, tables and a detailed bibliography, the book casts new light on both film-festival studies and the scholarship of contemporary East Asian film.

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmbooks



How the Movie Brats Took Over Edinburgh: The Impact of Cinéphilie on the Edinburgh International Film Festival, 1968-1980

By Matthew Lloyd, St Andrews Film Studies, 80pp, paperback, £7.99, ISBN 9780956373021

How the Movie Brats Took Over Edinburgh provides a lively and extremely informative account of a key period in the history of the Edinburgh International Film Festival. Charting the influence of French cinéphilie and the theoretical debates surrounding the influential journal *Screen*, the book makes a strong argument for the festival's role in shaping film culture and the film-festival agenda. As someone who worked for the Edinburgh International Film Festival for more than a decade and has himself organised important film festivals, Matthew Lloyd provides an informed and highly readable account of one of the world's most important film events.

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Keeping formation

David Jays finds *Busby Berkeley's onscreen precision matched by offscreen turmoil*

Buzz: The Life and Art of Busby Berkeley

By Jeffrey Spivak, The University Press of Kentucky, 367pp, £35.95, ISBN 9780813126432

Busby Berkeley's military service wasn't exemplary. Denied action, as World War I ended soon after he enlisted, he was disciplined for unauthorised absences and for being found nude in charge of a bugle. The young American artilleryman who would become better known as Busby Berkeley was bored by drill. Hoping to titivate the daily sessions, he devised intricate formations for the six batteries, each of 200 men.

His drill was abandoned but, as Jeffrey Spivak's workmanlike biography demonstrates, Berkeley's method remained close to the parade ground, both on Broadway and in Hollywood. The most celebrated of dance directors (never choreographer – he was interested in formations, not steps), he used chalkboard drawings and a process known as “hanging the dollies”. “Small, fluffy dolls” were placed on hooks on an easel, at the intersection of chalk lines, to evoke a projected routine.

His performers must have felt not unlike those hooked-up dollies – Buzz wasn't famed for empathy. His directorial tools were whistle and megaphone (“Fast there, girls!” “Okay girls, now spread your pretty little legs”), and Spivak recounts tales of relentless retakes, schedule-skimming night shoots and crack-ups, whether emotional (Judy Garland had him fired from 1950's ‘Annie Get Your Gun’) or spinal (Esther Williams fractured three vertebrae on 1952's ‘Million Dollar Mermaid’).

Berkeley's best sequences marshal boggling ranks of performers, making changing shapes through sheer force of numbers. But they achieve phantasmagoric force through their shuttle between the overview of the throng and the close-ups of female faces glimpsed for an intimate instant. ‘Lullaby of Broadway’, from ‘Gold Diggers of 1935’, begins with a blanched oval in the dark – the singer's face – before expanding into a dizzying panorama of Manhattan nightlife (and dawn life too: Berkeley's routines for Warner Bros convey the charge of hard work, even as they swoop into fantasy).

Berkeley created a dazzle, licking in neon around the violins in ‘Gold Diggers of 1933’ or bouncing off his dancers' peroxide hair. The dynamic effects – shots from high above or below, domino ripples of dancers, circling eye formations, the suggestive archways of chorines' legs – were accompanied



Drill-master: Berkeley's dance routines drew on his experience of military parades

by scenic innovations like revolving stages or floors bored with peepholes for lenses. As Spivak notes, each take was shot with one camera at a time – then again and again, from different angles. A rigidly controlled vision, it produced an effect of delirious fancy.

It can be difficult to remember which Berkeley sequences belong to particular films – they frequently proceed in giddy indifference to the narrative. Spivak relates that they were often conceived in isolation; and when he graduated to directing his own films, Berkeley spent as much time as possible on the spectacular numbers, then crammed in the dialogue scenes at the end of the shoot. The author's dogged account of the numbers makes them seem especially surreal, as he describes how daily life spins into make-believe, or a carnival gives way to rousing militarism, with enough twirling eroticism to dizzy the synapses.

Spivak had access to Berkeley's own memoirs, rescued from a garage clearance. But as the films suggest, Buzz wasn't a man given to introspection, and

Perfectionism took its toll: when Berkeley was upset, he worked or drank

this biography does little to illuminate a personal life punctuated by drink charges and crash-and-burn marriages. Berkeley was close to his mother Gertrude, a redoubtable actress on stage and in silent film (plangent melodramas like 1919's ‘Break the News to Mother’). At Warner Bros, half of his salary was paid directly to her; not for nothing did one of his wives tell the divorce court that Busby was “a real mama's boy”.

A prized asset at Warner Bros and later MGM, Berkeley became a busted flush when a semi-naturalism came to infect musicals. His manner dated: Sinatra, starring in ‘Take Me out to the Ball Game’ (1949), considered him “too epicene and flamboyant to take seriously”. Perfectionism took its toll: when Berkeley was upset, he worked or drank – or took a starlet to the Hollywood hangout Slapsy Maxie's.

Spivak recounts two particularly calamitous episodes. In 1935, Berkeley's car ploughed into another, causing three deaths; he was acquitted of second-degree murder. “He's very highly strung,” a producer told the trial, “and walks around at times as though he was a little bit nuts.” In 1946, when Gertrude died and the IRS hounded him, he “crossed the inevitable line of madness”, as Spivak has it, and attempted suicide. “I'm going to mother,” he gasped.

The Search for Charlie Chaplin

By Kevin Brownlow, UKA Press, 220pp, £9.99, ISBN 9781905796243

Made in 1983 on the back of their seminal 13-part silent-film history series *Hollywood*, Kevin Brownlow and David Gill's *Unknown Chaplin* is a strange, *sui generis* document(ary) – a reverent, forensic portrait of the comedian's working methods that lilt between purpose-filmed interviews with surviving collaborators (half a century later) and primary footage of outtakes, de facto rehearsals and home-movie impromptus with guests to the Chaplin studio.

Struggling to illustrate the comedy episode of *Hollywood* with any footage of the art's most famous exponent (Chaplin's copyrighted films were guarded by a forbidding distributor, and public copies of the earlier films had been duped to oblivion), Brownlow and Gill embarked on an investigative trail that unearthed several troves of hidden Chaplin treasure. One lay in Chaplin's own vaults at Denham Labs, gatekept by his business manager Rachel Ford; another had been smuggled to Europe from a World War II bunker outside Los Angeles by a medley of contrabandists including Oona Chaplin, the collector Raymond Rohauer and archivist Henri Langlois. Chaplin himself never discoursed on his working process, and had earmarked much of this footage for the flames. But what Gill and Brownlow realised on joining up the rushes – whose repeated, slowly varying takes make Kubrick look snappy – was that he had developed his ideas right there on film.

This belated companion book – also available packaged with a DVD of the film by the Cineteca di Bologna – is a similarly hybrid tome, combining a beady account of the filmmakers' gumshoe work (complete with a gallery of oddball characters), full transcripts of their interviews and sharp observations on the original films. There seems to be a running joke about Brownlow's ever-changing “favourite Chaplin film”; I for one remain unsold on the world-view, but this is an eloquent illustration of the magnetic talent. ➡ Nick Bradshaw

Quest for perfection: Chaplin in ‘The Pilgrim’



RETIKUS, POSTERS AND DESIGNS (2)

Arthur Penn: American Director

By Nat Segaloff, The University Press of Kentucky, 344pp, £30.95, ISBN 9780813129761

The first biography of director Arthur Penn has arrived just a few months after Penn's death on 28 September 2010, a sad event noted in author Nat Segaloff's preface. The main text was written over a period of five years, with Penn's full approval and active participation. This, then, is very much an 'official' biography, but even an unofficial version would be unlikely to dig up much in the way of dirt, since Penn was one of those rare Hollywood figures about whom nobody had anything negative to say.

As far as biographical information is concerned, Segaloff's book will probably be the final word on Penn, but it's extremely problematic. For one thing, the writing frequently resembles that of a trashy bestseller ("Jack Warner had to pee," begins the prologue) – an approach that made a neat fit with William Friedkin, about whom Segaloff wrote an earlier biography, but hardly suits a director whose films were noted for their subtle nuances.

This yawning gap between style and subject is symptomatic of a larger problem, since Segaloff's interest in Penn's life is not accompanied by evidence of any interest in his work.



Actor's director: Arthur Penn, right, directing Marlon Brando in 'The Chase' (1965)

Theoretically, this is fair enough: as Segaloff says at the outset, "I leave it to future scholars to deconstruct and analyze his work. Here I analyze the man." Yet what it means in practice is that the author is thrown back on received opinions that are never acknowledged or challenged. *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) must be an important film, since an entire chapter is dedicated to it, *Target* (1985) and *Dead of Winter* (1987) unimportant ones, since they are

allocated little more than a page each (with no mention of how *Target* involved an exchange of projects with its original director, Ulu Grosbard, who inherited *Falling in Love* from Penn).

I wouldn't claim that these evaluations are incorrect, but it would be nice to have some sense of why they were made, or why Penn was even regarded as an appropriate subject for biography by Segaloff, who seems only vaguely familiar with the actual films.

The plot synopsis of *Penn & Teller Get Killed* (1989), for example, is completely garbled: the practical jokes are not part of a scheme by Teller to teach Penn Jillette "the folly of his arrogance", but rather an extended hoax devised by Jillette for Teller's benefit, while the "real-life murderous stalker" is actually an actor hired by Jillette. Together with the breathless prose style, this sloppiness reinforces the impression of something written quickly to meet a deadline.

Having said that, the book offers much that is valuable, with an impressive amount of well-researched material, logically arranged. The information about Penn's theatrical productions, which are given as much space here as his cinematic achievements, is particularly useful. I was especially grateful for the detailed account of Penn's activities at Black Mountain College in the 1940s, where he rubbed shoulders with members of the Bauhaus group, and which ultimately influenced his portrayal of the hippie community in *Alice's Restaurant* (1969). Segaloff's observation that movies were "a system he would forever keep at arm's length" suggests a possible explanation for the often reticent quality of Penn's cinema. One only wishes these hints had been more fully explored. **Brad Stevens**

Post Cinematic Affect

By Steven Shaviro, Zero Books, 192pp, £10.99, ISBN 9781846944314

Zero Books is the smartest and most timely publishing venture to emerge in Britain for ages – an outfit dedicated to resuscitating the notion of the engaged, critical public intellectual committed to thinking beyond the stale derivations of much academic writing, without stooping to crass populism. The latest stimulating addition to its already formidable list is the intriguingly titled *Post Cinematic Affect* by Steven Shaviro, an American professor whom some *Sight & Sound* readers will know for his fascinating blog The Pinocchio Effect, a laboratory for developing his own particular theoretical take on contemporary culture, drawing heavily on the likes of Deleuze, Marx, Spinoza, Jameson and Whitehead, among countless others.

For Shaviro, the notion of "post cinematic affect" is a radically new "structure of feeling" brought about by the ubiquity of digital media and neo-liberal economic relations. Shaviro prefers the term 'affect' to 'emotion' for the simple reason that affect is transpersonal; and unlike the so-called waning of subjective emotion that has preoccupied thinkers like Jameson, the flows of affect in the contemporary world have magnified to the degree where they swamp us, and elude subjective representation. One of Shaviro's stated ambitions is no less



Revelatory: Asia Argento in Olivier Assayas's 'Boarding Gate'

than an account of what it feels like to live in the early 21st century in the midst of these flows, partly through an analysis of four works that deliberately set out to grapple with these relatively new circumstances. "Films and music videos, like the ones I discuss here," he writes, "are best regarded as affective maps, which do not just passively trace or represent, but actively construct and perform, the social relations, flows, and feelings that they are ostensibly 'about.'"

The "maps" he chooses to develop his argument are the films *Boarding Gate*, *Gamer* and *Southland Tales*, and the music video for Grace Jones's 'Corporate Cannibal' directed by Nick Hooker. It has to be said straightaway that Shaviro's analyses are brilliantly insightful and provocative. Richard Kelly's *Southland Tales* (2005) was largely dismissed on release by the film-critical community (Amy Taubin was a notable exception), but this book should

prompt a rediscovery and a rethink. And anyone who had an inkling that Olivier Assayas's *Demonlover* (2002) and *Boarding Gate* (2007) were two of the most ambitious and pertinent films of recent years (both pretty much ignored in Britain, interestingly) will appreciate Shaviro's revelatory readings here – not least of what Asia Argento achieves in the latter film, where she somehow manages to stylise and naturalise her performance simultaneously.

It was only towards the end of Shaviro's book, during an overlong but still incisive reading of *Gamer* (2009), that I began to experience misgivings about his argument, intensified during the "Coda", where his bleak dystopian diagnosis of our ills becomes most pronounced. Are things really this bad, and so all-pervading? I balked at the concept of "accelerationism" as a potential way through the horror, and at exalting the directors of *Gamer*, Mark Neveldine and Brian Taylor, for "the purity and extremity of their cynicism". Which I realise, on Shaviro's terms, may simply make me myopic and backward-looking, unwilling to face the full extent of what's going on. Nevertheless, for all my reservations about Shaviro's conclusions, his is an absolutely crucial book for anyone interested in contemporary image-making and the state of the world today – a subtly argued, profound yet entirely accessible attempt to think through our current predicaments. **Kieron Corless**

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Ugly duckling

There are many different ways to experience a film, and I always try to respect the critic's taste and ideas as long as they are coherently argued. That all changed when I read Lisa Mullen's review of *Black Swan* (S&S, February). Am I the only one who thinks this is merely a trashy film for teens that has somehow managed to pass itself off as an arty 'psychological' work with a lot of so-called 'serious' (and mainly male) critics?

For starters, there's not one mentally stable woman in the film. These are the most ludicrous, stereotypical and retrograde representations of women characters I've seen for a long time: the hysterical, controlling mother; the insanely perfectionist, frigid daughter; the overtly sexualised and manipulative friend; and the suicidal dethroned queen.

The sexualities depicted are just like the swans, black or white, virgin or whore – with a middle-aged male wet dream of a lesbian sex scene thrown in. As for the 'horror(s)' in the film, Vincent Cassel's wooden performance and preposterous chauvinist character could be one of them.

Of course this 'virgin' frigid woman finally attains a sexuality and power that Mullen links to "perfection", but which in fact equate to being a successful tease. Once achieved, of course, the only possible denouement is death – and an Oscar for Portman.

Claire Cussiter
By email

Southern softies

The most interesting aspect of the letter from the group of professors (S&S, March) complaining about the decision to close the Stephen Street reading room is that 16 of the 26 signatories live and work either in or within about an hour's travelling time of Central London. I suspect that those film scholars who are not wealthy enough to afford the cost of living in the south-east will shed

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Impossible expectations

I feel the need to respond to Lisa Mullen's review of *Black Swan* (S&S, February). When she talks about the "trio of excellent female performances", I find it hard to understand why she chooses to highlight Winona Ryder over Barbara Hershey. Apart from anything else, Hershey is on screen for far longer, but more than that, her overbearing, erratic mother figure has a much greater role to play in the development/breakdown of the central character. Surely it is the mother who represents the terror of old age, and not Winona Ryder's jilted dancer? Hershey plays the character with a subtlety and finesse that Ryder isn't given the lines or screen time to match.

I also reject wholeheartedly Mullen's grand generalisations about a "boy-friendly thriller structure" and the idea that the film speaks mainly to the "concerns of 'women's pictures'". Is Mullen really suggesting that the men in the audience will enjoy the thriller aspects while the women appreciate other traits? I think the themes of "bodily imperfection, impossible male



expectation and the terror of old age" will speak to and be understood by any performer, athlete, academic, medic, engineer etc in the audience, be they

woman or man. Give us the benefit of the doubt – we are all human, after all.
Jonathan Davey
By email

few tears at the prospect of those highly paid professors having to step outside their comfort zone within the M25 occasionally, and venture out into the wilds of Berkhamsted.

Living and working in Yorkshire, it is literally cheaper, quicker and more reliable for me to visit Amsterdam than it is London; and in the current higher-education funding climate, my department's research committee is unlikely to allow me to do either very often. The BFI, therefore, is in principle to be applauded for a strategy that prioritises digital access to the unpublished materials in its collection, and comprehensive cataloguing of the published ones.

As someone who has struggled to find the time and the money to spend sufficient time reading and viewing at Stephen Street, two things have struck me about that collection. Firstly, most of it consists of published books and journals. Thanks to inter-library loans and other collections, copies are available elsewhere, not least in the British Library just round the corner from the BFI in Euston Road. Secondly, many of the unpublished manuscripts and papers in the BFI's special collections are in such a fragile state that researchers shouldn't routinely be handling the originals anyway, any more than they should be running the original camera negative of *Citizen Kane* on a knackered old Steenbeck. So from a conservation standpoint as well as to address the London-centric nature of the BFI, scanning them and putting them online makes perfect sense.

My real area of concern is that the rumoured job losses among the BFI's workforce of librarians will risk the permanent dissipation – and thus destruction – of a unique body of curatorial expertise on the body of published work relating to the moving image. I know that pretty much all my published writing owes a huge debt of gratitude to their expertise and support, and hope very much that the BFI's management will do all they can to protect as many of their jobs as possible.

Leo Enticknap
ICS Cinema Director/Lecturer in Cinema University of Leeds

The joy of collaboration

I support William Emsworth's call (quoted in Editorial, S&S, March) for more recognition in *Sight & Sound* of creative contributions other than that of the director: contributions from cinematographers, designers, editors, writers and others. Nick James defends S&S's "proudly auteurist" stance by reference to the director's "ultimate creative responsibility for the film". This may be a good definition of directorship, but it is no definition of auteurship.

If auteurship means anything, it refers to a coherent body of individual creative work, characterised by particular themes, motifs or style, sustained over time and across different projects. As such, it is equally relevant to cinematographers and editors, designers and directors.

Personally I'm opposed to the concept of the auteur, which reflects a literary and individualistic understanding of the creative process, and misses the collaboration that defines film as an

artform. I'd welcome more analysis that takes creative collaboration, partnerships and teamwork as its starting point.

Martin Spence
Assistant General Secretary, BECTU Clapham, London

The third Welles

Thanks for David Thomson's article on *Citizen Kane* (S&S, January) in light of the 2012 poll to rank the greatest films of all time. He well makes his point that while *Kane* is great, it should not be entitled to a coronation. He suggests other possibilities, but despite a mention of Carol Reed's *The Third Man*, he does not seem to propose it as a real alternative. But now that the unbawdlerised version of Reed's film is widely available, perhaps it deserves consideration. The photography goes beyond *Kane*, the script is equally compelling, and the same two lead actors are as good or even better. We might well pray for a restored print of *The Magnificent Ambersons*, but in the meantime we have *The Third Man*.

Ray Lahey
Ottawa, Canada

Additions & corrections

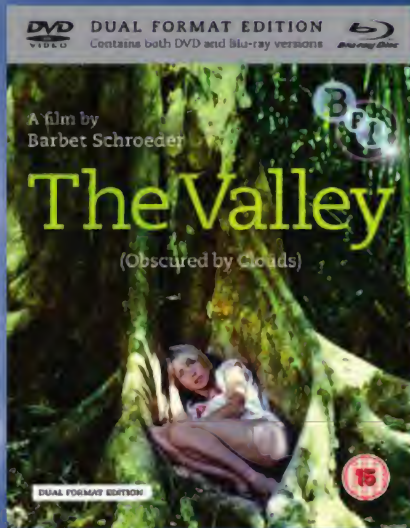
February p. 46 *Abel* Cert 15, 82m 16s, 7,404 ft +0 frames; p.50 *Blue Valentine* Cert 15, 111m 57s, 10,075 ft +4 frames; p.55 *Gasland* Cert PG, 107m 44s, 9,696 ft +0 frames; p.55 *Genius Within The Inner Life of Glenn Gould* Cert U 111m 20s, 10,020 ft +0 frames; p.69 *Nénette* Cert PG, 70m 58s, 6,308 ft +0 frames; p.75 *Tangled* Cert PG, 100m 48s, 9,012 ft +0 frames; p.77 *Travellers* Cert 18, 84m 6s, 7,568 ft +9 frames
March p.51 *Archipelago* Aspect ratio is 1.85:1; p.63 *The Insatiable Moon* Cert 15, 101m 14s, 9,111 ft +0 frames; p.74 *Son of Babylon* Cert 12A, 91m 44s, 8,256 ft +0 frames; p.76 *Two in the Wave* Cert 12A, 96m 29s, 8,683 ft +8 frames



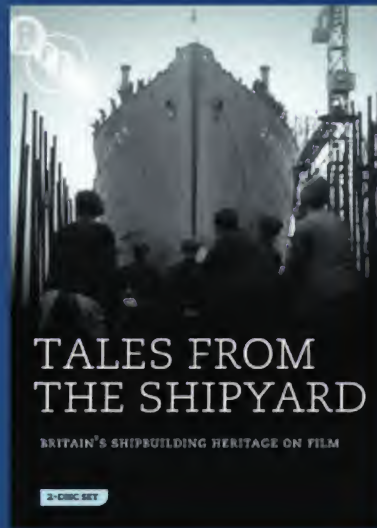
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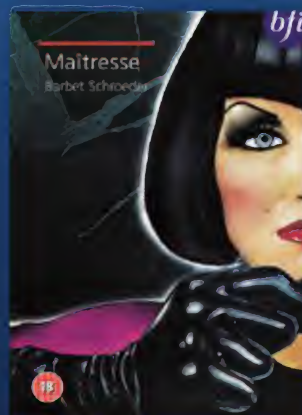


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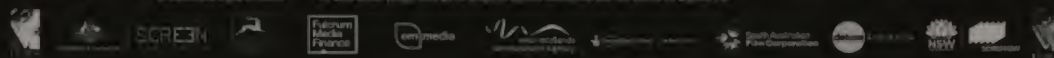
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